

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

N^o. 285.]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1864.

[PRICE 2d.

NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER XVI. THE VIEW OF A MAN OF THE WORLD.

"WHAT! Fermor?" Repeated after a second pause; the speaker's face halting the while between his habitual laugh and lagging frown. "—And Violet?" Violet had moved a little apart on the sofa; but Fermor, who always looked on these little crises as so many openings for mental training, determined that there should be no awkwardness. Why, indeed, should there be? A man of the world was present.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Hanbury," he said. "The first evening I have got out. And my first visit has been to the charitable friends who took me in, after my stupid blundering accident."

Hanbury was glowing all over, and looking excitedly from one to the other of the two faces. But the last words of Fermor recalled to him certain obligations, as indeed their speaker had artfully intended they should, and checked some unmeaning and perhaps wild speech he was about to make.

"They are waiting for you," he said, bluntly and even roughly, "down at the beach. Shall I tell them that you can't come?"

"Yes, yes," she said, timidously. "I can't go to-night; I have a headache. I don't care to walk."

Fermor rose to go. "It is too late even for me. I laugh at myself, but am obliged, in spite of myself, to be an invalid, and take all manner of ridiculous precautions about my health. We can go part of the way together. Miss Manuel and I have been improving each other. I have been teaching her some of my morbid philosophy."

The two went out together, and so this rather extraordinary interview ended. At the door, Hanbury stopped abruptly, and, in a gauche, almost rough tone, said, "I am going this way. Very sorry, but I have an appointment."

"Good gracious!" said Fermor, gaily, "keep it. Don't think of it. I shall get home very well; not quite an old man yet."

"Such a boor!" he thought to himself; "a true navvy!" And he walked along, smiling

to himself, and thinking almost with delight of his "consummate acting" in the little piece of that evening. "Charming little creature she is!" he said, half aloud. "There is really something bewitching about her. If that stupid lout had not come in, she would have told me everything about herself. I knew what she was coming to." Then he thought perhaps it was as well the lout had come in, for that confidence might have led on to "a business." "I believe I could wind her round my finger," thought Mr. Fermor, as he entered his room. "Confiding little angel!"

These speculations entertained him a great part of the evening. As usual, he got out his little theatre, lit up his castle in Spain, and put himself down walking among the grounds with the little Spanish girl upon his arm. Good old family, he dared to say. Money, he dared to say also. After all, a man must settle down some time or other. Then changing the scene to an inner room in the castle in Spain, he saw himself as lecturer, preacher, teacher, moulding this soft mind to his own pattern—a delightful occupation. So he worked the idea through a whole little play, and then—thinking of the earthly creatures down at the barracks, whose ideas were centred in a pipe—contrasted his own intellectual day's labour with theirs, and thought of going to bed.

They came to tell him there was a gentleman below who wished to see him—Mr. Hanbury. Fermor did not relish this visit. "Really, at this hour," he said. "Come, I suppose, repentant. These boors are always as ready to humble themselves as well as to offend. Show him up."

Hanbury walked in heavily—stalked is the word—but had scarcely the bearing of a penitent.

"I am sorry," he said, "to come in on you at such an hour, but the fact is, I could not have slept without seeing you. A great deal has happened since I left you this evening, and—"

Fermor, though he had shut up his theatre for the night, threw open the doors again with alacrity. The excited "lout" would afford him a little afterpiece before going to bed.

"Sit down, do," he said. "The hour is a little unusual, and I will ask you not to stay very long: an invalid, you know. Well, about this horse, eh? You are coming to that?"

Hanbury sat down mechanically, and looked

at him. "Horse! no!" he said, impatiently. "You *know* what I mean, and what I am going to say; you know you do. What is the use of this affectation of carelessness? I am tired of it. I want to speak very seriously."

"As seriously as you please," said Fermor; "but, I hope, with quietness and decency. Excuse my saying so. Indeed, if I did not know that you are one of those honest sincere natures that *must* say what they think, I assure you I should," and he paused for a little and smiled, "I should ring for a candle and go to bed."

"Not till you have listened to me," said the other, standing up excitedly. "We were very happy till *you* came, and she liked me—and it—it was all—settled almost. And now it is all changed, and I am convinced you have something to do with it. You know in your conscience you have, Fermor!"

"What logic!" said Fermor, smiling almost contemptuously. "But I suppose I am to understand you are alluding to the second Miss Manuel?"

"Yes, yes," said the other.

"Well, all I can say, Mr. Hanbury, is," said Fermor, "you astonish me!"

"But that is not it," said the other, stopping before him still more excitedly; "you are evading the question—purposely evading it—you know you are."

"But it *is* the question, excuse me," said Fermor, very coldly. "Here is a person with whom I have but the pleasure of a very slight acquaintance, but whom I trust I shall come to know better, comes bursting in on me at scarcely a visiting hour, pours out a torrent of reproaches about a young lady being changed, and says I know it, and can't deny it. What is *it*, pray? Well, if I *do* know and don't deny it? Really this is what I must call very childish. Now do, as a favour, sit down again and tell me what it is you want, or what you complain of; and let us talk rationally."

Hanbury, very much sobered by this speech, did sit down, awkwardly, after a second's hesitation.

"Now listen to me," said Fermor, "for I will reason with you. But as we have got so far in the matter, we may as well finish with it to-night. A lady you admire has suddenly changed towards you. Very well; what have I to do with that?"

"Exactly!" said Hanbury. "Now we are coming to the point. It is very hard. It was all settled. And we were so happy, and—and—Why did you do it? I never injured you," he added, piteously.

"Not intentionally," said Fermor, smiling. "But, still reasoning with you (for to another man I would say at once, 'Sir, you have no business to bring *me* to account'), I ask you again, what have I to do with it, having been shut up here for three weeks? Do you suppose, because a young girl, who has seen as little of the world as a nun, grows a little cold, that you are to go about from house to house venting

your grief? Really, I must say, for the lady's sake, it is scarcely—"

Hanbury, who felt like a great fish in a great net, feeling his helplessness, and, perhaps, some truth in what had been said to him, now struck out wildly, as it were. "I can't talk with you, Mr. Fermor," he said; "I have no gifts that way. But this must be settled one way to-night. I want to know what you mean to do."

"Mean to do!" said Fermor. "That is a wide question."

"It is far too important a matter to be quibbled away in this fashion," said Hanbury. "You know what I mean."

"To save time," said Fermor, "and supposing that I do catch your meaning, suppose me to do as you say I have done; or rather, what would you have me do?"

"Give her up—yes, to speak plainly, give her up. I know you are superior in many ways. You have been in the world, and know how to manage these things. Can't you find some of the fine court ladies—they are more suited to you? Do, and leave me her."

"I see it is hopeless," said Fermor. "In fact, it is so very delicate a subject to discuss, and if I were to speak freely on the matter, it would not be respectful to our common friends. If you mean by 'giving up' to cut off visits, or make any ridiculous marked exposé of the kind, I decline to do so at once. It is much better to be candid, you know. I can't afford to get into an absurd position for anybody."

Hanbury looked at him hopelessly and helplessly. "If I might suggest anything," continued Fermor, "I should say the proper manly course would be to exert yourself, and go in regularly and win back your position. You know the old saying about women having to be won."

"I see," said Hanbury. "I understand at last. But don't be too confident, Mr. Fermor. I know I am rough, and can't show off in a drawing-room; but still I believe that honesty and manliness will always have some sort of weight of their own. We shall see how it will turn out. I will take your good advice, though I believe it was not meant to be taken."

"You're quite a privileged being here!" said Fermor.

"I won't detain you longer," said Hanbury; "but I see my way. I may know little of women, but I should scorn to find *my* amusement, or feed my vanity in what they call 'Conquest.' I should prefer trying to save them from such cruel fate."

"With all my heart," said Fermor, rising and taking the candle; "a very proper rôle, which I quite envy you. But let me tell you it requires some gifts—something more than the mere will. You may break down."

"Never!" said Hanbury, turning to go.

"We shall see," said Fermor. "Well, we have agreed on something. And now will you let me ask a favour?—only one—which is, not to let us have any childish pettishness before

other people. It is *so* absurd. 'Let dogs delight,' you know, but not men of the world, grown up like you and me. There, good night."

"Upon my word," he said, as he lay his head on his pillow that night, "this is getting more and more exciting every minute. It is like a play. I am almost sorry I gave him that bit of advice. Poor soul! I shall beat him easily."

CHAPTER XVII. DISCOVERY OF A "TRUE GENTLEMAN."

FERMOR's days went by tediously enough, solaced, indeed, by but little company and the "potted meats" of Mudie, with which he was victualled steadily. In what was to be seen, however, from his back window he began to take a growing interest. Every day there was the same little scene, which he watched, himself unseen, the chair brought out, the cushions, the invalid daughter, with a face that would have been charming to look on if lit up with the colours of health, and the grim, rigid father, trying to bend his stern economy into the gentle offices of nurse. On him Fermor looked with repugnance. He was a mere "day-labourer" in manners, but still even in *that* class there were the family virtues sometimes strongly developed. With this salvo—a sort of apology made to his nicer feelings—he could indulge himself in looking on, and, curiously enough, began to find an interest that increased day by day in the companionship of these figures—for to him they were no more. He would have given a great deal to "find out something" about them. But he could not bring himself down to the familiarity of questioning his man, though he knew that the "man" enjoyed almost the friendship of the "woman" next door.

On the evening before he went out of hospital, as it were, a letter was brought in to Fermor, in a stiff, broken hand, that looked like a bit of iron paling. "A bill," said Fermor. "How they do persecute one." He opened it, and read with some surprise:

"Sir,—I called on you lately about a dog which kept my daughter awake a good part of the night. When I waited on you, I assumed, both from your appearance (excuse my saying so), as well as from the way in which I have always found such remonstrances are received by men, that the mere fact of *requiring* the dog to be removed would offend your *pride*, and that you would therefore meet me with a hostile and impracticable tone. I thought, then, the best way would be to anticipate and prevent, by a sort of firmness, any such reception.

"The thing was too serious to be trifled with. I have but one daughter in the world, who, after a life of roughness and trouble, has become a life to me. We had thought her in a decline; but this place has been the first where she has shown any signs of mending. Naturally I felt anxious,

and spoke more strongly than, perhaps, was necessary. I see I made a mistake, and that I was speaking to a gentleman. I have never apologised to any man, and never shall to any man, but, at my daughter's request, I beg to thank you, which I omitted to do, for your so kindly anticipating our wishes.

"I am, Sir, yours,
"JOHN CARLAY."

Though there was an unpleasant taste about this, still Fermor was somehow pleased with it. He turned it over and over. "An original," he said. "I said so from the first"—this was scarcely true—"and yet there is decidedly something of the gentleman about him" (which, perhaps, lay in that recognition of the gentleman in *him*). "Very odd," he went on, and thought how curiously true blood thus always impressed everybody. He went to his little writing-case, and, on delicate paper decorated at the top with two letters which seemed to be embracing or wrestling, he wrote a coldly polite acknowledgment.

C.F.

"Captain Fermor begs to acknowledge, &c."

Then he recollects that the other had written to him in the first person; "an ill-bred thing," no doubt, but still, it would look like "ungentlemanly" insolence to freeze him up with an answer in the third. "Now," said he, tearing it up, "that is just what Forsyth, or Showers, or Cadby, or any of those fellows down there would do."

He knew better, and began again :

C.F.

"Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. I am very glad that the misapprehension under which you laboured has been removed. I fancy you will always find that a *true* gentleman will be ready to anticipate any request, so reasonable as the one you made, especially when a lady's health or wishes are concerned.

"I am, Sir, yours truly,
"CHARLES FERMOR.

In his present condition of monotony, this little incident was something to think over with interest. He even read again, pretty often, his answer to the "day-labourer's" production, and thought nothing could be more nicely turned. He even fancied himself speaking these sentiments coldly and calmly. It seemed to him the skilful French fencer gracefully parrying with a frail rapier the rough clumsy stroke of a sabre. It was all sleight of hand, and he looked down at his pale woman-like fingers, and thought how it was that good breeding and gentility helped them to wield that social rapier—the pen.

A couple of days later, when Fermor was

quite given back to the world (only he had been recommended to stay in his lodgings on account of the "good air"), he met Major Carter on the road, leaning, more for affection's sake than support, on his son's arm. "So glad to see you," said Major Carter, with his airiest smile of encouragement. "You are looking much better, but not quite restored as yet, I can see. Delicate about here," said the major, putting his hand on his own face. "No wonder, I declare. And how are you now?"

"You never came to see me," said Fermor. "I assure you I should have been glad to have seen you. I had no one to tell me the news of the place, or anything."

Not in the least affected by this candid confession of motives, Major Carter replied hastily, "Very good of you. Shall I tell you the reason? Somerset here knows it as well as I. I said it to him only yesterday at breakfast. Fact was, I knew you would be worried with visits, perhaps with having to talk when you were not in the humour, or have even to listen when you were dying to be rid of us. Indeed, I passed the other night, and saw that man that has the horse—Crawfurd or Hanbury, whatever his name is—coming out. After that, I felt it would scarcely have been fair."

Fermor smiled. There was a good deal of the gentleman about this major, after all.

"By the way," said the latter, "I knew it would be no use asking you; yet if I did not mention it, it would look naturally very strange. But we are having some friends coming to us to-morrow night, in the French way."

Fermor began to contract sensitively. Here was this man trying to fasten an intimacy on him. "I rarely go to parties; never, in fact," he said, coldly.

"So I said to Somerset this morning. In one sense it is scarcely worth asking you. It was for the Prices—old friends of yours—the Prices of Bletchley."

"What! are they here?" said Fermor.

"Yes, they came when you were sick. Sir Charles Honyman, the two Campbells, the Manuels, Mr. Butler our new clergyman, and a few more."

"If I can manage it," said Fermor, in a ruminating sort of way, "I'll try and look in. You see, I must take care of myself now."

"To be sure," said the major. "We'll leave it in that way. I'm ashamed to ask a Town man to such a thing, and yet I suspect those manufacturing people, the Slacks, who are giving their sumptuous ball next week—a blaze of vulgar splendour—will not get you to go to them. Tell me if I have guessed right? I know I am only the merest acquaintance of yours, scarcely that, indeed; but I am sure I have judged you right."

Fermor smiled, a little pleased at this compliment. "Well, finery," he said, "is scarcely my line. Give me ladies and gentlemen, and let them give their parties in a barn, if they like."

"Capital! very good, very good indeed!" said the major. "Ah, Somerset," he continued, sadly shaking his head. Which, though a little vague, somehow did convey to Fermor that there had been a design of taking him for a model, but that it was now plainly hopeless to imitate him.

"An odd thing, too, you will say," the major went on. "I have asked that strange man next door to you, the stiff gaunt man—Carlay."

"Rather a bear," said Fermor, thinking of his own experience of him. "Yet a something—I don't know how, but really there is something of the gentleman about him."

"How singular!" said the major, with admiration. "Somerset, what was our conversation this morning?"

The youth only elevated his eyes—as if the coincidence passed all speech.

"Ah, you see! Why, I confess I am ashamed. My first judgment was that he was no gentleman. He wanted the air, you understand. But since, I have heard all about him. A most singular history. A good family gone astray, and all that sort of thing. It is very odd. Do you know, Captain Fermor, I envy you that instinct of yours."

"Yes," said Fermor, with quiet superiority; "I think I am pretty well up in that sort of thing. I can't be taken in easily—not easy to pass off plating on me for silver."

As he went home, Fermor owned to himself that that Carter was a well-bred sort of person, and, it was easy to see, had mixed in superior circles. He was half inclined to "look in" at his little party.

Sauntering on, he began to think with tranquil pleasure on what he, without affectation, considered his "conquest," and the dramatic scene he had passed through. Marriage was not to be thought of. "Though," said Captain Fermor to himself, "I suppose, one of these days!"—that is to say, one of these days the nuptial Juggernaut would demand its victim and crunch his bones. He thought he would go and see them again, and have a petite verre of dramatic excitement. He wanted a fillip. He looked at himself. Suitable touching and colouring had been got in skilfully. The canvas would do. "Poor, poor Hanbury," he said, smiling, "how he struggled and 'flopped' when he felt my harpoon in him!"

He was coming down one of the little streets of the town, when there crossed it at right angles, about a couple of hundred yards away, that very "poor, poor Hanbury," walking with that very Miss Violet Manuel of whom he had been thinking. They did not see him, and passed out of view in a moment. But he recognised at once a sort of check shooting-coat, which had often offended him on the score of its being in execrable taste, and his companion—not from dress, but from an instinct hard to describe—he knew at once. He stopped impatiently, turned back, then turned again, as if he were ashamed of himself for what looked like a mortification.

Curious to say, in the midst of all that confusion of anger, disgust, contempt, and disappointment, which seemed to choke him disagreeably, like a cloud of dust, he felt sudden sharp stroke of pain, not coming from his recent illness or suffering, but of a kind that surprised him. It was not known to physicians or surgeons.

For the rest of the day he was moody, and bitter, and pettish, and felt a curious restlessness, which prevented his settling down to Mr. Mudie, or, indeed, to anything serious.

CHAPTER XVIII. ROGER LE GARÇON.

CAPTAIN FERMOR often said pleasantly that he was "a social Van Amburgh," and that he could tame any savage human lion with his steel whip. Pleased with himself for his handling of the next door wild animal, he very soon began to regard the wild animal itself with complacency. He was like a tonic, he thought, like bitters even: it was refreshing to meet these odd mental crooked sticks. The common run of minds were a heap of smooth sticks turned in a lathe. One stick was the duplicate of the other. And in this train of thought it occurred to him that it would be a "gentlemanly" thing for Van Amburgh to go in and call on the wild animal he had so happily tamed.

He knocked. A grim woman, like a Swiss toy, said that master was out—out in the garden, that is, which was as good as out. Let him "leave his business," whatever that might be. Fermor, growing highly sensitive, and selecting a card, was nervously making protest against the idea of his being supposed to be eager to secure his way, "Not at all! Pray don't, I have not the least wish in the world,—just give that, if you please," when there appeared at the end of the hall the tall, grim, cast-iron figure of Mr. Carlay, with a grey hat on, that looked like a stiff steel helmet, and leaning on a stick that might have been an iron rod.

"Captain Fermor," he said, without advancing to meet him, "from next door? Do you wish me to do anything for you? It is quite useless asking me. I know nobody, and nobody knows me."

"Excuse me," said Fermor, hastily, "you quite misunderstand. You need be under no apprehensions. Merely the common every-day form of leaving a card."

"A card?" said the other, taking it from the maid, and looking at it as if it were a curiosity. "Ah! I am outside all this sort of thing. One of the forms, as you say."

Not relishing the way in which his well-meant condescension was being accepted, Fermor said, "I am really sorry to have intruded on you. In fact, I—almost a mistake indeed. So you will excuse me."

He bowed and was going, when the grim voice said shortly, "Wait. Would you come into the garden a moment?"

"I don't understand," said Fermor, hesitating. "I don't care for flowers."

"I should not care to show you what I don't care for myself. I want to show you what I do care for—my daughter."

Fermor shrugged his shoulders as though he said, "I object to the whole business, but as there is a lady—lead on!"

The girl was sitting, as usual, in the sun, on a cushioned chair, and her head rested languidly on a soft pillow. Her eyes were fixed vacantly on one point.

"Here," said Mr. Carlay, stalking down upon her with the steady swing of a pendulum, "here is Mr. Fermor, the gentleman who sent the dog away."

The girl raised her head in some confusion, for she had thought it was only her father returning on his old grim beat.

Fermor, himself again in the presence of a lady, thought he would "reassure" her, and got on his most soothing manner. He was sorry to see she had been suffering, he hoped she was getting better. He was sure the air was good, at least he had found it so, for they were both invalids. His, indeed, was only a trifling accident, a scratch; people had, however, insisted.

Fermor used often pleasantly to divide humanity into tongues without ears, and into ears without tongues. The convalescent girl was of this latter class. He might, too, have classed her as a "devotional ear." In a very few moments he had set his fluency stop on, and the *το εγώ* was whirring round.

"Now take me," he said, "for instance. I think I may say I am independent of the usual associations. Someway I have trained myself to it. Other men talk of being bored, and that sort of thing. I can hardly follow them. I confess I have trained my mind systematically. I don't allow myself to be bored. I don't make any boast of it, &c., &c."

And in this way he aired the *το εγώ* up and down in a gentle canter, and opened to her the secrets of his personal psychology. She listened at first a little astonished, then not quite following him, finally interested. It was all new to her, who had been accustomed to the grim gritty diapason of her sire. She was a soft amiable girl, all gentleness, made for petting, and to have her hair smoothed through the day by fond hands. Seeing he had touched the proper key, Fermor put spurs to the *το εγώ*, and made it caracole with fire.

The grim Carlay, meanwhile, was walking far away up and down on a beat as if he were a Prussian sentry on duty. He took no account, and was no doubt working the cast-iron machinery he called his thoughts. After what Fermor thought of as a "conversation," but which, strictly, was a monologue, he went away. The grim sentry never went with him to the door. And this was Fermor's introduction to the Carlay family.

"Poor invalid," he thought, "what a life she must have?" And if his conversation had much the same virtue as a king's touch was believed

to have, it would be churlish not to apply it. "And yet I don't know," he thought; "people would say it was affectation. But I declare genuinely I take no trouble about it; the thing comes to my lips of itself."

Between the two gardens there was only a low wall. Taking his cigar in the morning, which he did about as regularly as he did his roll and coffee, he could see the "poor invalid" already disposed on her cushions; and leaning on the wall, he wished her good morning, and asked how she did. He was going to "touch" again, as the kings used to do. His eye noted a little change—a red bow on her neck, and an ornament or two.

He began again. He made the *τό εγώ*, or "I," leap the wall backwards and forwards, and perform all manner of gambols. "You think me affected. I know you do; yet *I* don't call it affectation. It really is not my way, &c.," according to the usual formula.

Fermor was "refined looking," and though only visible as a sort of Elgin marble, by reason of the wall, it was a very effective torso. He travelled through a couple of cigars before he had finished his monologue. Then he thought, with his skilful powers, he would examine this "child" on her history, about which he was a little curious, which made her talk, and the simplicity of her narrative amused him. Then he tried her on reading, she saying that she read a good deal. Did she read French? Indeed! Had she ever read a thing of Roger le Garçon, called *La Rose en Evidence*? No? Then would she let him send it in to her?

"Common people," said Fermor, "taking up that book, would say it was a common thing. Of course they would. I found it out. Mind, I don't want you to take *my* view. You must, of course, judge for yourself. I only say this, that if you want philosophy, sense, wit, and human nature, you have it there. Above all," said Fermor, becoming deeply grave, "it is fit for any lady's perusal. I am always most careful, I assure you."

In the evening arrived Roger le Garçon, in paper swaddling-clothes, and sealed with pink sealing-wax. Roger le Garçon had not made his fame as yet, nor did he enjoy the esteem on railway stall or bookseller's shelf, which Fermor awarded him. Some day, no doubt, it would come. There was a picture or two by an artist of the name of Calkinwood, who had been much neglected by the public, and a song or two by an undiscovered composer, in which he discovered beauties corresponding to those of Roger le Garçon, and thus literature, music, and painting, were embodied in Calkinwood, Roger le Garçon, and the undiscovered composer. But the little pale green Roger had gone on many visits to ladies' houses, and had travelled round the country like the Kensington Loan Collection.

It was the calumet or pipe of peace of all Fermor's intimacies. Once it had passed into her room, a telegraphic cable had been successfully laid. This was but the first step; then

there was to follow a little series of lectures and illustrations of the beauties of Roger le Garçon.

THE LIVES AND DEATHS OF THE PEOPLE.

THE Medical Officer of the Privy Council is required by the Public Health Act of the year 'fifty-eight, to submit to the Lords of Council for presentation to Parliament a yearly report of the proceedings which their lordships, with his advice, have directed to be taken under that act. The actual work thus done under authority of Privy Council has been of a kind to attest the worth of the services of Mr. John Simon as a first-rate sanitary officer, empowered to feel the pulse of the country. His series of reports represents, in fact, a continuous inquiry into the cause and distribution of diseases that may be abated or abolished. There is no feeble endeavour to take in at one grasp the whole vast argument; but having set out in the report of 'fifty-eight with an argument "on the preventability of certain kinds of premature death" which served as a programme to the inquiry, Mr. Simon has worked year after year in steady pursuance of a single plan. And so he is gathering slowly and surely into the series of his annual reports a harmonised body of the most practical information on the causes and the distribution of disease. Thus, in 'fifty-nine, he set on foot a skilled inquiry into the social and personal conditions tending to produce diarrhoea and diphtheria. In the two following years he directed investigation of the facts connected with the prevalence of consumption and diseases of the lungs. In 'sixty-two he instituted inquiries into the effects of working with arsenical green and with phosphorus. Every year, but especially in the year 'sixty, he has pursued inquiry into the conditions producing typhoid fever, and the variations in its relative mortality. This year's report, published a few weeks ago, while it adds largely to the information given last year upon the state of vaccination in this country and the consequences of neglect, takes up several fresh topics in the study of preventable disease; the most prominent being an inquiry into the sufficiency of the food taken by different classes of the people.

As to the state of public vaccination, our chief officer of health may well push forward an active system of inquiry, since small-pox, which has not killed one person in the last eight years in the Grand Duchy of Baden, and has not destroyed a life in Copenhagen for the last thirteen years, killed two thousand persons last year in London only. By experience of what has actually been done elsewhere, it has been clearly proved that the disease can be extinguished by a complete system of efficient vaccination; very great importance attaches, therefore, to the report of the physicians, Dr. Seaton and Dr. Buchanan, who were directed by the Privy Council to inquire into the state of vaccination

among Londoners. Their report stands first in the appendix to Mr. Simon's Blue Book, which contains first, in about eighty pages, his own generalisation of and comment upon the results of the year's inquiries, and then in seven hundred pages an appendix formed of the original reports of the skilled inspectors who were directed to inquire into the different matters chosen this year as the special subjects of investigation.

A statistical return of the Registrar-General's, lately printed, shows that while in forty-four of the six hundred and twenty-seven registration districts of England, there were in ten years no deaths from small-pox among children under five years old, other districts varied much in the rate of mortality proportioned to the neglect of vaccination. In Shrewsbury the mortality from small-pox among young children forms more than a ninth part of the deaths from all causes; in Northampton and Plymouth about an eighth part, and in Merthyr Tydfil as much as a sixth! It is shown that these variations are dependent on the state of public vaccination. Thus, from their elaborate examination of the state of children in the London Vaccination district, Doctors Seaton and Buchanan find that there is, from several causes, failure to a great extent by actual neglect of vaccination, varying in degree in different districts, and by vaccination inefficiently performed. Of those vaccinated only a third part have obtained the high degree of protection furnished by the production of four good sized vesicles. The hands of particular good or bad vaccinators could be clearly traced by the scars on the arms of the school children. Thus we are told that the vaccination of Mr. Guazzaroni could be recognised by its conspicuous excellence, in any school in Kensington, and that "some very fine vaccine scars were seen in Lambeth Infant School, the work of Doctor Smyth." So it is not only in works from the desk or the easel that a good critic recognises and admires the distinctive artist hand. Of a thousand children who showed on their arms the trace of a vaccinating master-hand, the proportion that were also pitted by small-pox, was but one and a quarter; of those showing good scars, the proportion was two and a half; of those who had been ill vaccinated, this proportion in the thousand was seven and a half; but of those who had not been vaccinated at all, the proportion in the thousand was three hundred and sixty! So that while thoroughly good vaccination, indicated by the production of four perfect vesicles, is thirty times safer than bad vaccination; even bad vaccination is fifty times safer, and moderately good vaccination is two hundred times safer, than no vaccination at all.

Efficient public vaccination is most surely obtained when the vaccination stations are convenient for the population they are meant to serve, are carefully dissociated by the parishes from the whole machinery of poor relief, and are open only on one day in the week. What is wanted is a continuous course of arm to arm vaccination, and this is only to be secured where

the vaccinator operates on about five hundred cases in the year, and brings most of them together at fixed intervals. As for the connexion between public vaccination and the parish doctor, it simply hunts the public from the vaccinators' doors. In Deptford and Woolwich, one of the public vaccinators was the parish surgeon, who vaccinated in his surgery at the hours fixed for attendance of the pauper cases of sickness. This was resented by the independent poor, who sent nearly all their children to the vaccinator who had no parish appointment. In St. George's-in-the-East many parents refused to allow their children to be touched by the public vaccinator himself, who was also the parish surgeon, but went readily to the surgery of his deputy, who had no parish appointment. Practising upon this feeling, the parish authorities of St. Giles's, who thought it desirable to force as many as they could into the hands of private vaccinators, opened no other public vaccinating station than the workhouse and some adjacent premises used for parish purposes. Inquiry shows that public vaccination is, on the whole, decidedly more efficient than that by private practitioners, who are but occasionally called upon to operate. It is desirable, therefore, to encourage to the utmost, instead of discouraging, the use of the vaccinating stations legally established, and to disconnect from them utterly whatever can suggest the notion that the use of them is a receipt of the grudged parish alms.

These questions concerning vaccination have been especially forced on attention by the epidemic of small-pox in London, which began at the east end of the town in the middle of the year 'sixty-two, kept pretty much north of the Thames, and was at its height in the second quarter of the year 'sixty-three. The number of deaths was considerably more than two thousand above the average. Still, in the severest epidemic London has seen for the last twenty years, the deaths in a year from small-pox among each hundred thousand of the population have been only seventy-one, the average but ten; while a century and a half ago the average was a hundred and fifty, and the rate of mortality of some years among each hundred thousand was four hundred and seventy.

To get rid of small-pox altogether, nothing is wanted but a complete and effective system of public vaccination. Within half a mile of every house there might be a vaccine station for a district large enough and well enough frequented to provide, at its fixed hours, a certainty to every mother taking her child thither, of finding at the right time, the right man ready to do his work in the right way, and fresh lymph for him to work with. There should be fifty or sixty stations and no more, under the regulation of an independent committee, exercising all the functions now exercised in this matter by thirty-nine separate authorities, and there should be an effective register and law to compel parents to have their children rightly vaccinated.

The next subject of inquiry in the Health Officer's Budget is the sort of support given to

health by the food of the people. We can know but imperfectly what goes to build up or destroy the health of a people, if we give no heed to its meat and drink. For due inquiry into the food of the English labouring classes it was necessary to pay some attention to the dietaries of the working class in Scotland and Ireland. Of course inquiry could be made only in a few households that seemed to be fair samples of their class, between five and six hundred in England, about thirty in Scotland, and about fifty in Ireland. As a general rule, too, it must needs appear that the unmarried labourer had the most money to spend upon himself, and that the married labourer, who had to keep up the strength by which he lived, usually fared better than his wife and children, who were in some counties miserably fed. The inquirer set out with a theoretical view of the chemical elements of life in fuel, food, and flesh-producing food, and the quantity of each necessary to avert starvation diseases. A woman, he said, must have in her daily food at least three thousand nine hundred grains of carbon, and a hundred and eighty grains of nitrogen, or as much nourishment as is contained in a half-quarter loaf. A man wants usually about a ninth part more. Now, there were examined forty-two families of silk-weavers, and these did not quite come up to the mark; and thirty-one families of needlewomen, and these did not nearly come up to the mark; and of the farm labourers' families more than a third were below the mark; and though the mark is a theoretical one, yet that it is no bad standard of what is meant by "just enough to eat," was shown when it was applied in the preceding year to the Lancashire operatives, for the average health was found to be below par whenever the quantity of food taken was pronounced by such a test to be inadequate. There are more mysteries in the matter of diet and nutrition, and the use of the same food under different conditions of life, than any man can express chemically; but there is nothing very theoretical or far-fetched, or incredible, in the assertion that a healthy working woman must eat at least a half-quarter loaf every day, and that a man must eat a loaf and a thick slice off another, or get the same quantity of nourishment in other viands, and is likely to fail in health if fed below that standard. We can all understand that and believe it. And when the food is below par, it is not only in food that privation has been suffered. "It must be remembered," says Mr. Simon, "that privation of food is very reluctantly borne, and that, as a rule, great poorness of diet will only come when other privations have preceded it. Long before insufficiency of diet is a matter of hygienic concern, long before the physiologist would think of counting the grains of carbon and nitrogen which intervene between life and starvation, the household will have been utterly destitute of material comfort—clothing and fuel will have been even scantier than food; against inclemencies of weather there will have been no adequate protection; dwelling space will have been stinted

to the degree in which over-crowding produces or increases disease; of household utensils and furniture there will have been scarcely any; even cleanliness will have been found costly or difficult; and if there be still self-respectful efforts to maintain it, every such endeavour will represent additional pangs of hunger. The home, too, will be where shelter can be cheapest bought—in quarters where commonly there is least fruit of sanitary supervision, least drainage, least scavenging, least suppression of public nuisances, least, or worst, water supply, and, if in towns, least light and air. Such are the sanitary dangers to which poverty is almost certainly exposed, when it is poverty enough to imply scantiness of food. And while the sum of them is of terrible magnitude against life, the mere scantiness of food is in itself of very serious moment."

But in respect of a large number of our underfed poor, much can be done by the mere diffusion of information. They don't know how to make the most of their means. England, for example, fails curiously behind Scotland and Ireland in the use of milk, which, if its price be compared with its great nourishing power, is cheaper food than almost anything used in its place. The oversight is not peculiar to the English poor. Let any Highlander in an English town, seeing a milkman on his summer rounds, observe the size of his cans and ask him how many families he supplies out of them, and the answer will astonish him. Especially in a house where there are children, it would be well if every one remembered that milk is not a luxury to be bought by ha'p'orths and used only for the spoiling of tea, but that it is a cheap and precious article of diet, which, if freely used, may have its cost saved in less valuable and more expensive articles of diet for the young, and, especially, ten times and twenty times over in doctors' bills. In Wales they take their milk in the shape of cheese, which is very nourishing.

Dr. Edward Smith, in conducting his inquiry into the food of our labouring classes, looked for healthy, intelligent, and thrifty families, living as carefully as they could by labour that produced small earnings. The questions asked were private, and their intrusiveness was met with a cordial readiness to help to a good end; there was reluctance to answer questions only in half a dozen instances; wherever it was shown, of course all questioning was desisted from. With the readiest there was always difficulty in calculating averages, for families with small earnings are never equally well off at all times of the year; their diet also, especially where they have that important aid to health, a patch of garden ground, or where there is fish accessible, varies much with the season. In the north of Scotland, says Dr. Smith, "the idea of an average is a leading feature of the mind," and it was easier to estimate the dietary for all the year round.

But now to begin with the in-door workers, and take first the silk-weavers and throwsters. These are well paid when in full work, but their

trade has been for many years so prostrated, that they are, as a rule, ill fed; though the fluctuations in their earning power make it difficult and somewhat delusive to speak of their diet by the way of averages. So far as averages go, they are, says Dr. Smith, below the minimum by about a thousand grains of carbon and a hundred and eighty grains of nitrogen a week. They use, on an average, nine and a half pounds of bread a week to each adult. One man said, that in times of plenty the consumption of bread in his family rises from twenty-eight to forty-two pounds; nearly all were found using potatoes at the rate of about two pounds a week for each adult. One family in three used other garden stuffs, but in more than half of the families some use was made of treacle as a substitute for butter. Two in three were found to eat bacon in quantities varying from a quarter of a pound to two pounds in the week; two in seven were found to eat butchers' meat in quantities varying from a quarter of a pound to six pounds weekly. The whole average is a little over two pounds of meat weekly to each family. But this is had irregularly. There would be none in bad weeks, and it would be bought when work was better. Or it would be bought for the Sunday's dinner; often a baked sheep's head, or breast of mutton, with the dripping kept for use throughout the week, and what might be left of the meat eaten next day. Only where there is great thrift, and some sufficiency of income, is meat found to be eaten daily. There is a general dislike to the fat of meat, and a general desire for relishable food, as herrings, cockles, shrimps, cooked fish, stewed trotters, sausages, pickled pork, black-puddings, liver and bacon. The average allowance of milk was found to be a pint a week for each adult; but at Macclesfield, where there was no beer drunk, two or three times as much. Tea was found to be used in every family but one, the average consumption being two ounces a week to a family, but in Spitalfields three ounces and a half. Coffee was used in half the families from among whom these general results were got. All but two out of seventeen London families of silk-weavers were found to drink beer, nearly five pints a week being the quantity per family of those who drank it. The average cost of a week's food, was found to vary in different places from twenty to thirty-three pence for each adult; being lowest at Macclesfield, where the greatest actual amount of nourishment was got for a shilling, and highest at Bethnal-green and Spitalfields, where the food bought was the least nourishing. The London weaver pays heavily for meat and tea, buying both in the most costly way, bacon by pennyworths, and tea by daily quarter ounces. In London the children working away from home, instead of taking with them dinner prepared by the mother, are supplied with three-halfpence or twopence a day, dinner money, which they spend at a cook-shop: usually a penny upon pudding and a halfpenny upon potatoes. When they spend twopence, they

are permitted to sit down and have a little gravy, or fat, added to their meal.

But of all classes the quality and quantity of whose food was inquired into, the needle-women were found to be faring the worst. They have taken to their calling when other resources failed, and are a very mixed class, bound together only by the community of want. The average income of each adult is just below four shillings a week: there being complaint of insufficient work in every department, and the poor women sometimes remaining unemployed for weeks together. Sometimes the needle-woman receives a weekly loaf of bread from the parish, to which she adds what else her earnings will permit. The workers are all in feeble health, and use tea at the average rate, for each adult, of an ounce and a quarter weekly; some use half an ounce a day, being refreshed and sustained through hours of toil, though little nourished by its costly stimulus. They do not even put food into it by a free use of milk, which is only bought by one needlewoman out of three, and then usually at the rate of a farthing's-worth a day. Of meat some buy two ounces for three-halfpence, others two ounces of bacon daily; others a quarter of a pound of cooked meat three times a week, and half a pound on Sunday; others only a pennyworth of sheep's brains for the Sunday dinner, or a pennyworth of black pudding for dinner or supper. The weekly average cost of the needlewoman's food is two and sevenpence, and she so spends a shilling as to get less food for it than any other member of the poorer labouring class.

In the south of England there is an extensive manufacture of kid gloves, Yeovil being its centre. Three and sixpence is paid for scaming the backs of a dozen kid gloves; the stitcher, who is obliged to stoop to the machine and place her eyes very near her work, can only live by working for twelve hours a day. In one case the stitcher worked from six in the morning until eleven at night, to earn five and sixpence a week. "It was lamentable," says Dr. Edward Smith, "to see children from nine to fourteen years of age kept at this employment during the whole day, seeing nothing of the world around them, and cut off from the amusements and exertion so natural to children, and so necessary at the period of growth. The needle-women of London did not impress my mind so unfavourably as the stitchers of gloves at Yeovil, since the former were for the most part in middle or advanced life, whilst here were children or young women who were consuming their health and losing the pleasures of life for the barest pittance." The Derbyshire stocking and glove weavers, who earn in their hamlets an average of nine shillings a week each man, or nearly seventeen shillings a week each family, make their own bread, eat oatmeal gruel, make more than an average use of peas and rice, have nearly all of them small cottage gardens which supply fresh vegetables, use meat and bacon, take an average of six pints of milk to each family, and use, in half the houses, eggs. The average cost

of food was found to be twelve and sixpence a week for each family, and although not in a high state of health, they live well up to the minimum of what is necessary for continued health. In the shoemakers of Stafford and Northampton health is not good, for there is want of thrift and cleanliness, and as the wife and children are very ill paid for their labour, the support of the family falls on the husband. A pair of Blucher boots at one-and-threepence, or of Clarence boots at two-and-a-penny the pair, is rather less than the day's work of a moderate workman, and the fact that a pair of boots can be made in a day has led to the habit of taking the work home for daily payment, and of buying the food daily in small quantities. In nine families where the wife and children added something to the earnings, the average income was a pound a week. But two pounds a week is the extreme earning power of a first-class workman.

As a general result of the inquiry among all these classes, it appeared that of bread the needlewomen eat least, the shoemakers most; that of the persons interrogated in all classes, only four—three of them being kid-glovers—went wholly without sugar, the kid-glovers generally using least sugar, the needlewomen and stocking-makers most; the balance of carbon in the diet being readjusted in these cases by an exactly reverse proportion in the use of butter. Only in five of the whole number of cases was there no meat at all eaten, and the five were all found among the silk-weavers of Macclesfield and Coventry. But twenty in every hundred eat butchers' meat in no appreciable quantity, preferring to use bacon. Beer of the ordinary strength was found to be drunk very generally by the silk-weavers of London, and by the shoemakers, and a very weak beer by the stocking-makers of parts of Derbyshire. In half the families who were taken as fair types of the condition of the poorer labouring class, beer formed no part of the household dietary.

From families sustained by in-door occupation the inquiry turned to the labourers of England out of doors. There is great variation in the rate of living in different counties, besides local peculiarities of dietary, as in the cider counties of Devon and Worcester, and the oat and barley district of the north of England. The total income of the labourer's family is often much greater than the wages of the husband; thus, in two families in Wiltshire, the whole earnings were twenty-six shillings a week, although the wages of the husband were but nine shillings. It is hard to reckon in averages these variations, and the value of allowances often made of wheat, potatoes, or potato ground, barley, milk, beer, cider. "In Dorsetshire, where the nominal wages are eight shillings a week in money, there are also free rent of house and garden, fuel cut and carried, a chain of potato ground prepared and manured, and a bushel of wheat (worth five shillings) monthly. These are estimated at about four shillings a week. A shilling is also given when sent on a long journey. In summer-time twenty shillings

extra are allowed for harvest-work. One gallon of cider per day, at fourpence per gallon, for six months to the labourer, three pints of cider per day during six months for the wife, and one quart of cider for each working boy, during the same period, are given. This estimate is derived from Sir John Smith's property near to Maiden Newton, and clearly shows that the wages in money do not represent two thirds of the whole income, but it must be added that these advantages are not universal." The income of the farm-labourer's family may also be increased by employment of some members of it on straw-work in Beds, Bucks, Essex, Herts, Oxford, &c.; on gloving in Somerset, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, &c.; on mining and metal work in Gloucestershire, Derbyshire, Notts, Salop, Northampton, Northumberland, Cumberland, Yorkshire, &c.; on mill-work, and various kinds of weaving in Derbyshire, Notts, and Yorkshire; on dockyards in Devon; on needle-making in Worcestershire; on blanket-making in Oxfordshire; on the knitting of babies' boots in Rutland, &c.; on railway labour, and brick-making in many counties, and upon various industries in agricultural districts on the outskirts of large towns. Potato-ground is a great comfort to the farm-labourer. When potatoes have to be bought, he and his wife reckon them to be dearer than bread, but when grown they save bread, in some families as much as two shillings a week, and they have the advantage over bread, of enabling the housewife to make up a hot meal with the morsel of meat or bacon, that would otherwise be cold and uninviting. Cabbage they cannot eat without meat, unless fried in fat; slight use is made of turnips; but onions, which can be eaten growing, or can be kept for use, are a constant blessing of savouriness in almost every cottage. In some counties, the farm labourers are found to regard sugar as a luxury; in Devon, where milk is abundant, it is most rarely given to any member of a family except the infant. Its use is, of course, increased in the fruit season. Only one family in a hundred was found, among all the poorly paid labourers of England, living wholly without meat; but thirty in a hundred adopt bacon as their only meat, and forty-six in a hundred use both butchers' meat and bacon. There is a general belief that beef is better food than mutton. As to bacon, though English bacon costs eightpence or tenpence a pound, and American bacon is now generally to be had for fourpence and sixpence, it is the costly English bacon that our poor buy, and consider cheapest of all meats.

American bacon wastes much in the boiling, and as the water in which it has been boiled is usually thrown away, there are so many slices said to have been lost. On the other hand, in frying it does *not* waste with liquid fat, which is the children's share out of the frying-pan, the dripping for their bread. Good bacon is popular with our poor because it does not shrink in boiling as butchers' meat does, while it supplies fat in which cabbage may be boiled; because it can

be fried in little squares, with greens and potatoes, making a savoury mess, and leaving dripping in the pan ; because, unlike butchers' meat, it can be stored in the house ; and in some degree also, because it is sold by the grocer who gives credit, while the butcher requires ready money payment. Where there is not much meat used in the cottage of the labourer, it is all cooked for the Sunday dinner, usually the only one at which the whole family is collected and sits at rest together in unwonted ease. What is left from the Sunday dinner is on the following week-days the husband's, and whether he take it with him bit by bit to his daily dinner in the fields, or eat it at home, it is his, as matter of course, ungrudged. The household faith is "that the husband wins the bread and must have the best food." His physical well-being is the prop of the house. If he have eaten up his remainder of meat or bacon by the middle of the week, and there be butter or cheese, he takes that for his dinner at the close of the week, and the wife and children at home are then reduced to dry bread, which is converted into a hot meal by the use of tea. When the dietary is poor, and produces little animal heat, hot foods are as valuable as they are comfortable. Dr. Smith attaches little value to the small quantity of inferior tea that gives its name to the warm drink, and believes that the great charm of the tea lies in its warmth, but the twelve pints of skim milk that he wishes they would buy in Devon with the same threepence they spend upon an ounce of tea, can also be made boiling hot ; yet it is felt, and we do not doubt rightly, that though it may contain more food it will not give the same sort of cheerful refreshment that even bad and weak tea gives to those who, knowing little of better, are not offended by its flavour.

But often even in country places the labourer cannot get as much milk as he wants. "In many districts, and those perhaps where the farms are largest, as in Wiltshire, the farmer finds it a trouble to serve the skimmed milk to the customers. The dairymaid is needed for other work, and the mistress thinks it below her position ; and hence he gives it to his calves, pigs, and hounds, and refuses it even to his labourers. I found," says Dr. Smith, "families living in the midst of plenty of this kind of food, who would have willingly purchased it, but had not been able to obtain it for two years, and where, in consequence, the health of the children suffered." One mother, living among Wiltshire dairies, of which the farmers would not sell milk, had brought up five children, and the whole had not drunk one gallon of milk. Like cases were met with in Somerset, Gloucester, Lincolnshire, Suffolk, and other counties. Buttermilk is almost wasted in England as a very cheap nutritive and plentiful article of food, and whey is almost invariably given to the pigs.

On the whole, it appears that the farm-labourer, apart from his family, is adequately fed, long lived, and little troubled with sickness. When he takes his meals at the farm-house, his risk in the way of diet is from over-feeding. He has

usually four meals a day, meat and bacon once, twice, and even three times a day, milk twice a day, puddings or pies three times a day in Devon, and usually daily elsewhere ; beer also or cider. In Yorkshire he is found to get cheesecakes and custards almost daily at breakfast and dinner, or even to take an hour's nap after dinner. He objects to mutton because it is fat, and throws the fat under the table. When living at home, the labourer who gets in some counties large allowances of cider or weak beer, drinks it all, the instances being exceedingly few in which any is saved in his small wooden cask, and carried home for the comfort of the wife and children. In harvest-time, in the cider counties, men not only drink their allowance of a gallon a day, but, as there is then no limitation, are found drinking daily two gallons and more.

In the principality, North Wales was found to be more prosperous than South Wales, the farm-labourers better paid, and better fed with better kinds of food. In South Wales very little meat of any sort is used, but health is maintained on bread and milk and cheese. Dr. Smith regrets that the use of tea and coffee is spreading in the poor districts of North Wales, for his carbon and nitrogen theory is not large enough to comprehend a reason for their popularity.

In Scotland, the shepherds increase considerably their meat diet, by eating the lambs and sheep which die of an acute disease called braxy, and perhaps also of staggers, and some other ailments less acute. The mutton is salted, and becomes stored meat. The free use of milk and oatmeal also gives an advantage to the Scotch farm-labourer. In Ireland, Dr. Smith rejoices in the abundance of meal, potato, and milk. When potatoes are plentiful, and are, with buttermilk, the sole food of the peasantry, the daily allowance at a farm-house to each man is ten pounds and a half of potatoes, and three pints of milk ; a day's food which includes no less than ten pounds of fluid. One of the labourer's families visited in Ireland was found to be consuming four hundred and forty-one pounds of potatoes weekly. Since the potato famine, the use of this popular diet has been restricted to a portion of the year, and the instances have been few in which the labourer has been able, as he used to do, to eat his pig. The pig is now sold to pay rent, or buy clothes. The average cost of a poor Irishman's food is one and tenpence a week ; of a poor Englishman's, a shilling more ; of a poor Scotchman, yet another sixpence more than the Englishman's ; and of a poor Welshman, about twopence more than that of the Scotchman ; but the Irish, says Dr. Smith, get the most, and the English the least, nourishment ; supposing the whole question of nourishment to be, as he takes it, a mere question of so many grains more or less of nitrogen and carbon.

Our Chancellor of the Health Exchequer takes for the next topic of his yearly Budget, a particular disease of defective nourishment, the sea scurvy in the mercantile marine, a result of

deficiency in vegetable food. This is reported upon by Dr. Robert Barnes, physician to the Dreadnought, who shows that nearly half the men admitted into the Sailors' Home at Poplar, are suffering from scurvy at the time of their admission, and that a twentieth part are seriously diseased with it. Scurvy has furnished a twenty-fourth part of all the cases admitted during the last dozen years into the Dreadnought Hospital Ship. Many cases never pass through hospital, but lie in the low lodging-houses by the waterside. Shipowners of Liverpool and other northern ports, of Hamburg and America, are said by Dr. Barnes to "exhibit the greatest amount of disregard of the safety and health of their crews." There were recently admitted to the Dreadnought, twelve cases of severe scurvy from one ship in which nineteen was the whole complement of officers and men. A ship at sea, so disabled of men, could not reef topsails or bring the ship to in a gale of wind, and ships must sometimes, from this cause, be lost at sea. Yet scurvy is altogether a preventable disease. Vegetable food is its one essential antidote. Lemon-juice was introduced into the navy in the year seventeen 'ninety six; and in Haslar Hospital, which before that time received upwards of fourteen hundred cases in a year, scurvy is now an almost unknown disease. There used also to be a land scurvy when vegetable food was little used on shore. In the merchant service, says Dr. Barnes, scurvy is never known in the cabin, and "if the captain and mates know how to preserve themselves, they know how to preserve their men." Scurvy would be rare if even the mere provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act were obeyed. Mr. Simon counsels inspection by the officer of customs who boards ships arrived from a long voyage, to secure fulfilment of the requisite provisions of that act, as well as a coroner's *inquest* upon every man who is brought home to die of scurvy.

The next question is of employments hurtful in themselves, or hurtfully conducted. Thus, Dr. Whitley has been inquiring into the state of workers in lead and mercury. These have their lives shortened by hurtful employments, workers of lead being better protected than they used to be, though still suffering much from the poison where the work causes lead-dust to float in the air. Work upon quicksilver is either in water-gilding—a process most injurious to health, but employing few persons, and now being superseded by electroplate—or in the far larger business of mirror silvering, wherein our Health Officer holds, that "employers should be bound to provide all practicable arrangements for lessening danger to their workpeople, and should be prohibited from employing any person who presents, even in ever so small a degree, any sign of the characteristic metallic poisoning."

As to the unhealthy conduct of in-door work, not in itself injurious, by the over-crowding and bad ventilation, that breeds lung disease, by working without necessary rest or otherwise—three branches of industry, noted for frequent

sins of this sort, are investigated: the occupations of the dressmakers and needlewomen, the tailors, and the printers. Dressmakers suffer by over-crowding and deficient ventilation less than printers, printers less than tailors. Tailors work in their close rooms for twelve and thirteen hours a day, sometimes for fifteen or sixteen hours; printers have lighter work upon a weekly average, though there may be great strain at one part of the week, especially in the printing-offices of weekly newspapers. In printers and tailors, consumption and other lung diseases are in vast excess, and form two-thirds of all the causes of death; while between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five the mortality among London printers is notably more than twice as high as that of the male agricultural population. This is not a fact to take for granted and let alone. Mr. Simon asks that the effective ventilation of all in-door work-places be made compulsory by some appropriate provision of the law.

The next item in the Health Officer's Budget is Dr. Whitley's inquiry into the extent of marsh malaria in England, showing in what districts it is especially necessary that improvements should be made with a view to the complete (and altogether possible) destruction of this enemy to life and health. Upon this follows Dr. Hunter's inquiry into the remarkably high rate of infant mortality in certain marsh districts, which is traced mainly to a peculiar custom of retaining in familiar use the opium once used as a popular remedy for ague. A retail druggist in the Fens will regard opium as his leading article, and sell as much as two hundred pounds of it in a year, serving three or four hundred customers on a Saturday night with penny sticks or pills. A man in South Lincolnshire complained that his wife had spent a hundred pounds in opium since she married him. A man setting about a hard job takes his pill to set him a-going, and many never take their beer without dropping a piece of opium into it. With the opium believed in by the parents and nurses, children are quieted, and quieted to death. Every village shop puffs its own brew of the deadly "Godfrey."

The prevention of diseases that arise in hospitals, as erysipelas after operation, or the spread of contagious fevers—the whole large question in fact of the healthy construction and management of hospitals—is next opened. Dr. Bristow and Mr. Holmes report from personal inspection upon almost every civil hospital of note in England and Scotland, and upon the chief hospitals in Ireland, describing and commenting upon their construction, and reporting facts that show the degree of their healthiness. In this respect the great point for practical consideration is the ventilation of wards. Gentle and inoffensive currents of fresh air must scour every corner, and "hitherto," says Mr. Simon, in summing up the case, "without exception, plans of artificial ventilation for wards have been costly and fatal failures. . . . Whatever other appliances exist, a ward must be perfectly ventilable by its windows." The windows are the chief natural inlet of air, and an important out-

let; but the chimneys and the subsidiary shafts are other ways out for the used air.

The last topic of this comprehensive sanitary budget is violent interference with life or health, and that is discussed this year in certain forms of Accidental and Criminal Poisoning, which have been investigated and reported on by Doctor Alfred Taylor. Doctor Taylor points out that, as to criminal poisoning, there is virtually no check upon the purchase of poison enough to kill two adults, by anybody who is in the possession of threepence; while, as to accidental poisoning, incompetent druggists' lads again and again give oxalic acid for Epsom salts, arsenic for calomel, or even for magnesia. Even small village shopkeepers, who know nothing at all of drugs, sell deadly poisons, and keep them so loosely in store that thirty pounds of sugar of lead have been sent instead of alum for a miller to mix with his flour, and twelve pounds of arsenic have been sold to a lozenge maker in mistake for twelve pounds of plaster of Paris. Surely the law should make men heavily responsible who commit such mistakes. They are accidents that would not often happen if they were treated according to their true characters as serious offences.

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER LI. PRESENTIMENT.

THE countess and Lily were speedily installed in the Cottage.

The dwelling placed at the countess's disposal by Mr. M'Variety might, with almost equal propriety, have been dubbed the Barn, or the Mansion House, or the Log Cabin, for it partook, in pretty well-balanced degrees, of each and every one of the characteristics of the edifices just mentioned. Perhaps, when Ranelagh was the country-house of some great seventeen-century nobleman, it had been a Mansion—indeed, it yet boasted a fine old carved porch, and some latticed windows with deep embrasures of stone, which had a Mansion House look; but it had been half burned down, and patched up again with bricks and boards in a most heterogeneous fashion. What kind of roof it had originally possessed, was uncertain. The existing one was certainly of thatch. Its career had been an eminently varied one; and successive lessees of Ranelagh had put it to all kinds of uses. Mrs. Snuffburn, the housekeeper, who had lived through many managements, and whose memory was prodigious, was ready to take her affidavit that she had known the Cottage when it was converted into a cow-house. Manager Wobbell, who rented the gardens in '36, the Great Balloon year, was of an agricultural turn of mind, and kept pigs in the garden attached to the Cottage. His famous trotting pony, Hydrocephalous, was put out to grass in the adjoining paddock, and in the great hall he kept the Indian corn which he had grown after

an approved recipe of the late Mr. Cobbett. The corn came up beautifully; only the rats devoured the greater portion of the crop when it was garnered in, and the residue turned bad, so as to excite, the rather, ridicule than competition when exhibited on a stall in Mark-lane as the Royal Ranelagh Corn.

Monsieur Folliculaire, from Paris, who took the Gardens in the Coronation year (you remember: Folliculaire of Tivoli and the Montagnes Russes, who used to give promenade concerts long before Jullien was heard of), "remounted," to use his own expression, and redecorated the Cottage in the Louis Quinze style, covering the ceilings with flying personages out of Lemprière's Dictionary, and very scantily attired, and the walls with mirrors, gaseliers, and festooned draperies of pink and white glazed calico. Folliculaire was an imaginative man, mad as a March hare. His endeavours, nevertheless, were commendable. At the clapping of hands, tables laden with the choicest viands and the rarest wines were to rise through trapdoors; you had only to lift a corner of the table-cloth to find the keys of a harpsichord; and the ice-creams were always sent up in shapes representing the Vénus de Médicis or the Belle Chocolatière. But the machinery of the supper-tables wouldn't work, and the choice viands and rare wines were apt either to stick, in medio, between supper-room and cellar, after the manner of Mahomet's coffin, or else to shoot up suddenly, with alarming crash of crockeryware, scattering dismay and gravy among the assembled guests. Compelled to have recourse to manual aid in lieu of mechanical appliances, Folliculaire engaged waitresses who wore high powdered toupees, hoops, short skirts, and high-heeled shoes, according to the pattern of the shepherdesses of Watteau and Lancret. These young ladies, however, complained that the high-heeled shoes, in addition to being painful to walk upon, conducted to corns, and that the powder spoilt their hair. Folliculaire suggested wigs; but the perruques were continually tumbling into plates of lobster salad, and, besides, made the young ladies' heads ache. In despair, he replaced the shepherdesses by a corps of graceful nymphs attired as vivandières of the French army; and, for a while, the blue tunics, white aprons, and scarlet pantaloons, proved very attractive; but, as a rule, the British aristocracy were languid in availing themselves of the delights of the Trianon Pompadour; and the sudden bankruptcy and flight of Folliculaire (he now keeps a coffee-house at Malta) nipped in the bud his ingenious project for converting the Trianon into an Oriental Kiosque, with divans for smokers, and a bevy of houris, dressed like Gulbeyaz in Don Juan, to hand chibouques, narghilés, and coffee to the visitors, and execute Bayadère dances in the centre of the saloon.

By turns property-room, scene-shed, firework repository, and general repository for odds and ends, the Cottage had fallen into a curious state of dilapidation. The night watchman lived

there at one period. Sundry cocks and hens found out that the deserted rooms were good places to roost in, but they were at length driven out by the rats. At last a legend, which had long lain dormant, was revived, and the Cottage was declared to be haunted. The watchman, who averred that he had seen sights "enough to make a man's marrer turn to hicc," but was otherwise (as is ordinarily the case with ghost-seers) unable to particularise that which he had seen, removed to other quarters; while people, who hadn't seen anything, were, as usual, quite ready to invest the supernatural visitants of the Cottage with a definite form, only they were not unanimous. There was a party for a lady in a white nightgown much bedabbled with blood; there was another (headed by the cook) who placed implicit faith in the nocturnal appearance of a figure with horns and hoofs, who vomited sulphurous flames, and was supposed to be the spectre of a deceased firework man, who had sold himself to the Enemy of Mankind; while a by no means unimportant section, who pinned their faith to the assertions of the chief lamp-lighter, entertained no doubt whatever as to the periodical issue from the Cottage of two skeleton forms, mounted, one on the shoulders of the other, on a black horse, with eyes of fire. These were at once set down as the phantoms of the dauntless but unfortunate Babylonian Brothers, both of whom contrived to break their necks in a dare-devil ring performance in the reign of Manager Wobbel.

His subordinates thought Mr. M'Variety a very bold man, when, on assuming the lesseeship of Ranelagh, he announced his intention of living in the haunted Cottage. People tried to dissuade him from the idea, but he laughed them to scorn. "Just the very thing I've been trying for all my life," he remarked, in answer to their expostulations. "Only show me a downright bona fide ghost," he said, "and if it's a he, or if it's a she, I'll sign a three years' engagement with that ghost at ten, fifteen, and twenty pounds a week. What stunning double crown posters we would have out about it to be sure. Eh, Billy Van Post? 'The Ghost at Ranelagh: no augmentation of prices.' It would be tremendous." Mr. M'Variety, it will be remembered, lived slightly in advance of the period when every manager throughout the empire could have his ghost by application to Professor Pepper.

Mr. M'Variety, however, did not find it possible to add a "downright bona fide ghost" to the attractions of Ranelagh. His only nocturnal visitors were rats, and they, yielding to a judicious course of arsenical treatment, speedily left the Cottage in the prosaic phase of being rather an old-fashioned place, slightly rickety, and not very weather-tight. The manager, who had an eccentric fancy for occupying at least half a score of residences at the same time—his enemies ascribed to him as a motive for thus multiplying his domicile a desire to "dodge" the sheriffs of different counties who might possibly have judgments against him—took a fancy into

his head that the Cottage would be a snug little retreat when he was detained late in town, and a pleasant change for him when he was tired of his villa at Isleworth, his family residence in Brompton, his big house near Dorset-square, his chambers in Lyons Inn, and a queer little place, half office, half dwelling-house, he occupied in a triangular yard, beginning with a soap-boiler's and ending with a livery-stable, but dignified with the name of a square, and called after some saint, which he occupied in the wilds of Finsbury, somewhere between London-wall and Bishopsgate.

He soon grew tired of the Cottage, however, and said that it gave him the blues. He christened it the "Dismal Swamp." He was, perhaps, disappointed at finding no ghosts about the premises. After a few weeks, he ceased to reside there, and abandoned it to the occupation of the celebrated Albino Family, from the Valley of Dappes. The Albino Patriarch, his wife, and four children, all with fuzzy heads of hair, like spun glass, all with pink eyes, violet gums, teeth of a pale mauve, and ass's milk complexions, lived here for a while. They were very quarrelsome, and from black eyes and contused noses distributed among them by the Patriarch (who drank), were frequently rendered unfit for exhibition. After this they returned to the Valley of Dappes, where the youngest Albino girl, being alone on the top of a high mountain tending goats, was fortunate enough, in an ecstatic vision, to have an interview with Saint Teresa of Lima, who informed her that the Valley of Dappes was going to the devil, through the deplorable addictedness of the population to drinking hard cider and reading the Siècle newspaper on the Sabbath-day. She forthwith became a miracle; the clergy took her up; Monseigneur the Bishop absolutely condescended to issue a mandement about her, gently hinting that people who didn't believe in miracles in general, and St. Teresa of Lima in particular, were babes of perdition, and candidates for perpetual brimstone; and the whole family did much better than when they were at Ranelagh, the pink-eyed Patriarch drinking more freely than ever.

After their departure, and a brief interregnum, during which nobody to speak of, save a mouldy man in a snuff-coloured coat, a Scotch cap, and red worsted comforter, the fringes of which he used as a pocket-handkerchief, who had his dinner (generally consisting of tripe, liver, or some other visceral matter) sent him daily in a basin, drank cold coffee out of a black bottle labelled "rue gin," read with great persistency a pamphlet containing a report of the murder of Lord William Russell by Benjamin Courvoisier, and was stated to be in the employ of the Sheriff of Surrey—after the transitory occupation of the Cottage by this personage, another family were billeted there by the hospitable Mr. M'Variety. These were the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs from Mecca. There was a grandfather, who was a sheikh, and wore a green turban, but was one night recognised

by a stray tourist as having been bad shampoer at a bath in Cairo. The same tourist declared that the sheikh's eldest son had frequently attended on him in the capacity of a donkey-boy at Alexandria; that the sheikh himself, in the intervals of shampooing, was in the habit of relating improper stories, receiving payment in copper for the same, that the mother and her two daughters had belonged to the honourable fraternity of Almé, and that one particular hour, with the biggest black eyes ever seen out of a sloe-bush, whose vocation it was to sit cross-legged, in very baggy trousers, on a divan, and smoke a bubble-bubble, was an Algerian Jewess, who had formerly kept a little shop for the sale of sham sequins, and attar of roses even more spurious, in Marseilles. Be it as it may, the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs from Mecca were, for a time, very instrumental in filling Mr. M'Variety's treasury. It was a great sight to see the sheikh, with his very big green turban, and his very long white beard, strumming on a species of banjo—the Arab mandolin, I presume—while the Jewess smoked her narghilé, and the daughters danced the shawl-dance, kicking off their yellow slippers, and letting down their back hair in the most exciting passages, while the old woman, who had a pair of moustaches which would have done honour to a grenadier of the Old Guard, handed coffee round to the visitors at a shilling a cup; and the son, who had been a donkey-boy, executed complicated sarabands and back somersaults, uttering, meanwhile, the cries of his native country. The family were strict Mahomedans, and when they ate butchers' meat, which was seldom, a sheep was purchased for them, which they killed on the premises. You paid sixpence extra to see the sheikh grovelling on his prayer carpet: and the ladies never appeared in the promenade in the Gardens after the performance, without being strictly veiled. It was, however, unfortunately discovered that even the tourist was wrong in his shampooing theory, and that the sheikh was an Irishman, who had been discharged, not honourably, from the service of the Honourable East India Company. A newspaper exposure put an end to the performances of the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs. They essayed to work the provinces, first as Dancing Dervishes, and next as Maronite Christians fleeing from the cruel persecutions of the Turkish government; but were at last obliged to retire to Mecca, or Ireland, or obscurity.

And now the Cottage was occupied by Madame Ernestine, as the direct heir and next of kin, in a professional line, of the Ouli Zoug Zoug Arabs, stars of the East, whose light had waned and flickered and gone out, like many other lights of the other days of Ranelagh. But Madame Ernestine's star, at this moment, seemed to be in the ascendant, and Mr. M'Variety had paid full homage to her importance by furnishing the Cottage with many elegant articles which he had not vouchsafed to former occupants. He had fitted up the

largest apartment as a drawing-room, and flattered himself that he had done the thing in first-rate style. It is true that the carpet did not cover the whole of the room; but it was a bright red one, of a large pattern, with a fringe all round, and was thus a little suggestive of Indian splendour. The curtains of the windows were somewhat dingy and faded; but being lined with new pink calico, and tied up with yellow cord, with depending tassels, of the patterns which we see in portraits of military heroes, taken with a background of pillar and curtained sky, were indicative, particularly from the outside, of dainty elegance combined with magnificence. Mr. M'Variety had aimed at splendour rather than comfort, and, with this view, had introduced a great deal of lacquered brass and gilding into the apartment. There were heavy gilt cornices over the windows; an ormolu clock, with an obstinate partiality for half-past four, on the mantel-shelf; two or three rickety inlaid tables, with brass rosettes on their hips, and brass claws at the extremities of their legs; a tremendous ormolu chandelier, designed on a scale adapted to halls of dazzling light, and consequently altogether out of proportion to its present sphere, and a dozen or so of white and gold chairs, which had evidently, at one time or other, formed a portion of the costly furniture in the grand salon of a stage marquis. All this would doubtless have been very magnificent had not the effect been slightly marred by traces of the Albino Family and the Ouli Zoug Zougs on the walls and ceiling. Those traces consisted of stains and splashes upon the dingy paper, as if the Patriarch had been in the habit of throwing his heel-taps in the faces of the members of his amiable family, and missing his mark; and of dark smudges upon the ceiling, dimly suggesting that the Zoug Zougs had used the apartment as a dormitory, and been accustomed to go upon nocturnal hunting expeditions with a tallow candle. It was suggested by a certain person, that in order to have all things in keeping, it would be well to treat the walls to a new paper, and the ceiling to a pail of whitewash, but Mr. M'Variety would not hear of such a thing. "Never mind paper and whitewash," he said; "with all this gold about, and that magnificent chandelier, which cost a hundred pounds when new if it cost a penny, the room will look first-rate at night. When madame sits in one of those gilded chairs with her feet upon the back of that gilt stool, she'll think she is a countess in downright earnest."

Two of the smaller apartments had been fitted up as bedrooms, one for Madame Ernestine and the other for Lily. The appointments of these rooms were in much better taste than those of the drawing-room. Lily's little dormitory was exceedingly neat and dainty. It was furnished all in white—a white carpet with a small blue forget-me-not running through it, white dimity curtains to the little bed, and a white muslin covering on the toilet-table, on which stood an oval looking-glass in a white enamelled frame, wreathed about with lace. Madame's

room was furnished with equal comfort and elegance, but more gaudily, and not in white.

Mr. M'Variety flattered himself that the countess would be charmed with her new abode, particularly after her residence in the humble salons of Mr. Kafooze. When he heard that she was coming over to take possession, he stationed himself in the carved porch to bid her welcome, and perhaps also to give himself the gratification of witnessing her delight and surprise. The countess did not make her appearance at the exact moment she was expected—she never did—but she came at length, wrapped in an elegant sealskin cloak, poor Lily following at her heels, carrying a bandbox. The countess was magnificently dressed, and, through the softening medium of her veil, looked almost beautiful. She was in a passion as usual, and came up muttering something about cette vieille ganache de Kafooze.

"What's the matter now?" said Mr. M'Variety; "had any words with old Foozum?"

"Old Foozum, as you call him," said the countess, "is an owl, a toad, a bat, un oiseau de mauvais augure. Because I forgot the little riding-whip that Milord Carlton presented to me, and went back for it, he muttered something about his accursed stars, and said I should have no luck."

"But *you* don't believe in such nonsense?" said Mr. M'Variety, laughing.

"Believe! Bah! I believe in nothing," said the countess. "But it vexes me. Why should I have no luck? Dites-moi."

"Old Foozum is wrong for once, countess," said Mr. M'Variety, "for luck's in your way. What do you think of this for a residence? Will it suit, eh?"

The countess surveyed the Cottage for a moment with a look of supreme contempt. "So," she said, "this is my castle! Un beau château, vraiment! A palace fit for a queen! Fit for a cow, fit for a pig, fit for any animal that Monsieur M'Variety may have reasons for accommodating with a residence in the Gardens of Ranelagh."

"Now don't say anything disparaging of the Cottage until you've seen the inside of it," said Mr. M'Variety. "Come up-stairs, and I'll show you the drawing-room. But stay, one moment; look at the porch first—a real bit of antiquity, and no mistake." And Mr. M'Variety proceeded to point out the carvings, and expatiated upon their merits as relics of antiquity and works of art.

The countess stamped her foot impatiently. "Allons, monsieur, entrons!" she said, "I don't like the porch. I don't admire it at all; it is cold and damp, like a dungeon. Ma parole d'honneur, it gives me the horrors!"

"Oh, very well; come in and see the drawing-room, you'll like that better." And the manager led the way.

The countess, jerking an impatient gesture to Lily, immediately followed him; but she had no sooner crossed the threshold than she paused, and violently grasped M'Variety's arm.

"What's the matter?" said the manager.

"Something, I know not what," said the countess; "a sudden chill;" and she shuddered and turned pale as she spoke.

"Come to the fire and warm yourself," said the manager; "it is a bitter cold day."

The countess did not reply immediately. She stood as if transfixed by some sudden thought. At length she said:

"I do not like this place. I shall not be happy here; it chills the marrow in my bones. What did the old fool say? That I should have no luck?"

"Who," said Mr. M'Variety, "who'd have thought of you being superstitious!"

"I am not superstitious," she replied. "I am cold; give me some cognac."

"Ah, that's what you want," said the manager; "sit down a minute by the fire in Mrs. Snuffburn's room, and I'll bring over a bottle."

Mrs. Snuffburn, a thin, gaunt, ghostly woman, very deaf, with red eyes and a shrill voice, was at the door of her apartment—which was the kitchen—awaiting the arrival of her new mistress. She stood in the doorway, stiff and solemn, like a beckoning spectre. The countess, though faint and ill, could not help commenting in her usual flattering manner upon the housekeeper's appearance. "Ah, quelle horrible vieille!" she exclaimed. "C'est une sorcière!"

Mrs. Snuffburn, being innocent of the slightest acquaintance with foreign tongues, probably took this as a compliment, for she immediately handed the countess a chair, and said, in as kindly a voice as she could command:

"Sit 'e down, ma'am, do, and warm yourself, for you look mortal cold, to be sure."

The countess sat down before the fire, put her foot upon the fender, and rested her head upon her hand. Lily had never seen her so dejected, so softened. She put down the bandbox, and quietly approached her chair.

In a timid, faltering voice, Lily said, "Can I do anything for you ma—madame?"

The countess, without moving or turning round, took the girl by the hand, and drew her towards her. Poor Lily was startled and half alarmed, for the woman grasped her hand fiercely, though with something of tenderness. But the next instant, when Mr. M'Variety came bustling in with the cognac, she flung the little hand from her and pushed Lily away. "Quick," she said, holding out her hand for the glass, "or I shall do something that will make me ashamed of myself."

What was there that she, Valérie à la Beugleuse, the stable-girl of Marouille; she, the wife of Griffin Blunt, the roué, the sharper, and the debauchee; she, the sham countess and heartless adventuress, the wild woman of Ventimillioni's show, Madame Ernestine, the brandy-drinking exponent of the haute-école in the circus at Ranelagh—what was it that she would be ashamed of?

Was it the weakness of allowing one spark of human womanly feeling to glow for one moment

at her heart of ice ; the crime of permitting that heart to melt to the extent of a single tear ? It may have been. She drank off three glasses of brandy one after the other, as they were handed to her by her obsequious manager. Then rose, stood erect, and with a wave of her hand cast her thoughts and her feelings away from her, as one would cast a pebble into the sea. "C'est fini," she said ; "I am better now. Let us go and view the château."

M'Variety seemed to be quite relieved when the countess recovered her ordinary humour ; for the mood into which she had been sinking perplexed and troubled him. He was troubled as he would have been if a performing horse of his, noted for kicking and throwing his rider, had suddenly shown a disposition to be docile and steady.

The manager led the way to the drawing-room, and the countess followed briskly, singing a snatch of a gay reckless French song.

"What do you say, countess, is this your style?" he said, as he threw open the door of the gilded apartment. The proprietor of ten thousand extra lamps had not miscalculated the effect of the gilding and the brass cornices and the ormolu chandelier. The countess was delighted.

"C'est magnifique, c'est charmant!" she said. "Monsieur M'Variety, you are the prince of managers, and be assured that the disinterestedness of your regard for me has my highest consideration. You are a pattern to your profession, mon bon enfant, and I hope, when you die, you will be stuffed and put into a museum as an encouragement to managers. Ah ! I see your honest face mantle with gratification at the doing of a good deed ; but, ma foi, I have known managers who, if they had caught themselves performing a virtuous action, would have said their prayers for once in their lives, and asked to be forgiven. But you—vous êtes la perle des entrepreneurs."

"Thank you, countess. I'm very much obliged to you," said Mr. M'Variety, with a knowing look ; "I'm glad you appreciate what I have done for you ; for you see I've got the Cottage up regardless of expense. Come and see the bedrooms. This one's for you ; a snug crib, ain't it ? light, comfortable, and airy, with elegance into the bargain."

"Charmante ! charmante !" The countess was pleased, or feigned to be pleased, with everything.

"And this little one," said Mr. M'Variety, leading the way into the dainty white chamber, "is for missy."

"For missy!" said the countess. "Pourquoi ? Because it is all in white ? Why not for me ? White is the emblem of purity, is it not ? Why not for me then, monsieur ? Ha !" And she grinned that horrible grin of hers.

"Oh, well," said the manager, "if you like this one best, you can have it. Please yourself, countess, but I thought you would prefer the large one."

"Monsieur Mac," said the countess, tapping

the manager on the arm with her riding-whip, "you did not think anything of the kind. I am not a fool, Monsieur Mac ; but no matter, the imp shall have this dainty room ; the little devil shall be rolled in snow. She shall be my guardian angel." And she leered at the manager knowingly as she spoke.

Mr. M'Variety had seen a good many theatrical mothers and guardians in his time ; he knew how heartless, how ruthless, how rapacious they were ; but he had never known one to equal this terrible Frenchwoman. He was very glad to escape from her to the bustle of his managerial duties, in which he was accustomed to forget many things in connexion with his profession which it was not pleasant to dwell upon and think about.

When he had gone, the countess called for Lily. The girl entered the room timidly and doubtfully.

"Come forward, child," said the countess ; "nearer, closer to me. There. Listen. I am your mother. Do you hear that ?"

Lily answered with a faint "Yes."

"Your father," continued the countess, "was a scoundrel, a cheat, a beggar. He deceived me, beat me like a dog, degraded me, and at last left me to the mercy of the world. He died as he had lived—a beggar—and yet he left me a legacy. Do you know what that legacy was ?"

The countess repeated the question fiercely, and Lily answered falteringly, "No."

"Then I will tell you," said the countess. "You were that legacy. Do you understand ? No ? Then you shall. I am your mother, you are my daughter. It is the duty of a daughter to obey her mother in all things. You shall obey me in all things. Do you hear ?"

Lily stood before her mother, trembling and with downcast eyes, and answered, "I hear."

NOSES OUT OF JOINT.

It is not pleasant to have anything out of joint. A finger out of joint can neither wear diamonds nor darn a stocking ; a shoulder out of joint cannot carry a musket nor a hod—scarcely a shoulder-knot or an epaulette ; Pisgah cannot be climbed if the foot or the ankle, the hip or the knee, has started from its socket ; but the most uncomfortable, though not the most unserviceable, of all is when the nose is put out of joint, as it is so often, by the intervention of a foreign body between it and its aspirations. For years you go on in your appointed path of life with your nose in perfect order. It may be Roman, or it may be Grecian, aquiline perhaps, or perhaps only a common-place snub, but it is straight, at all events, and with bones and cartilages undamaged ; when suddenly Fate doubles her fist and gives you a tremendous blow, putting your nose out of joint for the rest of your natural term.

Take the example, known more or less intimately to us all, of the favourite brother or sister to whom you were everything in the un-

broken life of home and your first youth—the pet, the confidant, the twin cherry, the double life, the second self—all, in short, that one human soul could be to another. Your nose has ruled a straight line in this direction all your life as yet, and you never looked for a deviation. And would never have had one, you say in your wrath, if brother Charley had not met with that fascinating little puss of his, down in Northamptonshire where he went by such mere chance to pay a Christmas visit; or if sister Emmy had not fallen in love with that handsome scamp of a barrister, with whiskers bigger than his briefs, and a power of persuasion far beyond his powers of law, to whom Mrs. Scott introduced her (interfering old fool!) at Chiswick. And then what became of your noses, you poor betrayed fraternals?

Marriage, indeed, often puts noses out of joint; not only the one favourite's, but all sorts of noses belonging to all sorts of people. When my friend Wellbeloved married, he had a whole row of them, very badly dislocated, as the ornaments round his wedding-cake. Spiritually treated, that is; emblemised in orange flowers and silver Cupids, but noses out of joint in essence and indwelling spirit, whatever they were in seeming. His sister's was the biggest, perhaps—the youngest sister, with whom he had always been paired ever since their nursery days; but there was also her little son's, his only nephew, assigned his heir from his birth by far-seeing mamma naturally transferring her claim on dear Wellbeloved to young master, who could continue it. And then there was his friend Harry's, and Harry's wife's—a nearer friend still, if report was true of all that had been in the times before Harry married, and when Mrs. Harry had to choose between love and esteem, Harry and Wellbeloved, and chose the former, not repenting. And there was the pet niece's; a pretty little round Roxalana nose, which had always stood high in his good graces, in fact, higher than any other save his sister's, and a good many centigrades above his nephew's, though, like a prudent man able to bridle an unruly member, he concealed that fact, not wishing to have caps pulled before his face, and in his quiet way playing off one against the other, and keeping up the ball with all. (Be it remembered that all this time Wellbeloved was rich, of middle age, of easy temper, and unmarried.) When he saw Miss Merrybird, she put their respective noses out of joint in half an hour. A bright, cheery, blue-eyed, and golden-haired little bird as it was, too! who hopped on to the perch held out for her without the smallest hesitation, and sat there as contentedly as if she had been born on it and knew no other. And when her pretty rosy beak had destroyed the symmetry of all the rest, Wellbeloved found to his cost how many people had loved him for what they could get out of him, and how few for himself independent of their own gain. He did not break his heart at the discovery, though he opened his eyes and wondered in his soul. With little Miss Merrybird perched on his

finger, or nestling against his shoulder, he was perfectly indifferent to everything else, and though he would willingly have dealt in soothing plaisters—and did, largely, plasters of a fine ripe golden colour and brilliant metallic shine—yet, as he could not undo his real offence and make Mrs. Wellbeloved Miss Merrybird again, he could not build up broken bridges to the angle of the past, and so never got completely forgiven.

This instance, however, is of the graver manner of dislocation, affecting not only the pleasure but the very conditions and continuance of lives. For Wellbeloved's favourite sister, not able to assign young master a certain heirship on this side the united escutcheon, went down to Leicestershire, to live within the range of old Foxtail's vision: Foxtail being her deceased husband's uncle, also unmarried, past middle age, and childless: hoping that her powers of fascination, which were not small, might consolidate themselves into a fat codicil in this quarter. Which they did; and so firmly, that young master came into the possession of Foxtail Hall when the old man died, learnt the noble art of hunting, and broke his poor young neck one day before it had well settled itself into its manly stock. And the pet niece, withdrawn from undesirable society by her enraged parent—Wellbeloved's eldest sister, who had a spirit, and was proud of it—fell into the hands of Signor Grazie, professor of many arts at Milan, and became that most miserable of all created things, an expatriated British female, with her heart in the English lanes, a wife with a husband of a strange religion, friends of a foreign tongue, and children more their Italian grandmamma's than her own. All because of Miss Merrybird and her golden ringlets, and Uncle Wellbeloved's soft big heart.

Friends often put out other friends' noses. There was that affair of the Blanks with my Lord and Lady Fivestars, that I happened to know of, having seen and studied it from the beginning to the end, attentively. The Blanks had been greatly patronised by my Lord and Lady Fivestars—kind people in their way, and generous, but a little fitty, and not a little inconstant. However, the Blanks' reign was a bright one while it lasted, and they had no cause to complain. Mr. Blank was an indifferent portrait painter, and Lady Fivestars used to introduce him to all her friends as the modern Raphael; and Mrs. Blank was an authoress, and Lord Fivestars once crowned her as Corinna in the conservatory; and on their side the Blanks were fluttered and flattered out of all the little common sense they ever possessed—which was not much—and if they did not walk on their heads it was not for want of despising their feet. In the end they came out of their flutter, and then they drifted into that most dangerous of all stagnations—security. They forgot to be subservient; they diminished the profundity of their kowtows; they laid aside the pretty alphabet, all flowers and flourishes, with which they had hitherto spelt out their adoration of my

lord and lady, and their undying appreciation of the good that lay in them; they resumed their natural balance, and were no longer cephalopods but honest bipeds, such as Nature had made them; but they flattened their own noses in the process irretrievably. The Scotch doctor of the establishment called them pawky; my Lord Fivestars said they were scrubby; and my lady, with more delicacy if less discrimination, sighed as she confessed they had grown unpleasant, and she did not know what had come to them, they were so changed. In fact, their noses were falling out of joint by their own weight, when the introduction of their friends Mr. and Mrs. Dash completed the dislocation. Mr. and Mrs. Dash were newer, cleverer, more versatile, and more vivacious than the Blanks. They had talent in the histrionic line (my Lord and Lady Fivestars were great patrons of talent in all lines), and they could amuse a dinner-table or a supper party better than could Mr. Blank with his artistic hair, and his tepid réchauffé of Ruskin very weakly done, or than Mrs. Blank with her political lectures and awful enthusiasm for "causes." And so they flattened their dear friends' the Blanks' noses straight to their faces, and Lord and Lady Fivestars never even tried to raise them up again. But ever after this the Blanks became tremendous democrats; and the "insolence of a bloated aristocracy" was a kind of monogram sealing Corinna's effusions with the indelible and undeniable stamp of ownership.

The Blanks did the same kind of thing on their side; for, as the humblest parasite has a humbler parasite still batteing upon its translated juices, so the most devoted toadies have their own toadies a step lower; and the noses that get put out of joint in the drawing-room, tweak others awry in the lobby. The Blanks had their pet, young Silvertongue of the R. I. O., whom they patronised considerably, and about whom they rejoiced to talk nonsense and prophesy absurdities, after the manner of those who delight in reflected lights, whether from above their heads or beneath their feet. But his nose was put out of joint, just as theirs had been at Fivestars Court. Mr. Minim, also of the R. I. O., was one day, unluckily for poor Silvertongue, introduced to the Blanks, where he sang bass to the younger man's tenor, and carried it clean over his head by the strength of more sonorous vocal chords, and a more generous laryngeal arrangement. Henceforth it was Minim and not Silvertongue who was to revolutionise the musical world with the voice of an Apollo in a circumscribed register. Silvertongue was all very well, but his organ was being impaired by injudicious work; it had grown woolly, it had become metallic, it was tinkling, it was husky, it was harsh, it was piping, it was everything but what it had been when his nose went straight on end to the skies, and before Minim threw his masculine vocalisation into the adverse scale. Now Minim was everything, and Lablache and Ronconi were nowhere. I need hardly say that no one shared in this reputation of the Blanks. I never knew

of either gentleman coming out from the ruck of the chorus at the wings, where they did their business satisfactorily but in no wise remarkably, certainly free from censure by the authorities, but quite as free from praise.

This kind of nasal see-saw is very common with public men—the popular preacher, the fashionable doctor, the favourite author, or the beloved of the opera-house or the theatre. For a long time Mr. Whiteband is the minister under whose ghostly training you are making yourself a Christian athlete, ready and able for any amount of combats with Apollyon and his crew. No one is equal to him in power, or grace, or unction; he stirs your heart as no one else has done, he softens your conscience and enlightens your understanding, and you feel that the grace of a soul redeemed is due mainly to Mr. Whiteband, and his precious discourses. But one day you are induced to go and hear Mr. Blackhood. He too is a ghostly trainer of note, and has done wonders in his time, and with sinners more hardened than yourself. You go to hear him, and you are struck; you go again, and you are knocked down; and by that blow, which prostrates your inner being, Mr. Blackhood flattens Mr. Whiteband's nose and puts it out of joint definitively. You transfer your congregational allegiance; you vacate your long accustomed seat; you go through spiritual exercises of quite a different character, but which you declare to be more bracing, and better suited to your special condition: and Mr. Whiteband is left to mourn a defection of which he understands nothing; knowing only this, which is poor consolation at the best, that it has been by no fault of his own he has lost his adherent, and had his ministerial nose put out of joint so cruelly.

So it is with your doctor—the man into whose broad bosom you have poured out your secrets—the tale of your husband's ill temper and your children's undesirable propclivities, and Mary Jane's impertinence, and Amelia Ann's cousin in the Life Guards—the man whose very presence you have often declared gave you life, and for whose daily coming you have looked, as a fire-worshipper looks for the rising of the sun. All this and more has your favourite doctor been to you, for the space of months or years, according to the natural muscularity of your constancy. And then your friends persuade you to try the treatment of another medical hero, and one of their own adoring. Nothing will do for you but a total change of system, plunging from Turkish baths to cold douches, or from the horse play of the Allopaths of Dr. Sangrado's school to the subtle essences of homeopathy, which you swallow by faith not knowledge. You do so: perhaps with no result: perhaps with decidedly evil results; but you do not retreat. You may change and change again, and never be fixed with a medical attendant firmly rooted all your life after, but you will scarcely go back to the old broken nose love—for noses once broken are hard to mend, and no one likes to consort with them

while fractured. All medical men, like all ministers of floating congregations, are for ever getting their noses put out of joint; but they are not eels in general, and do not, so far as I know, become accustomed to the process, nor indifferent to its discomfort.

It is the public, and not a mere private individual here and there, that regulates the nasal line of operatic and theatrical stars; but there is always a succession of noses out of joint with them, each new star eclipsing all the former ones, unless of the first magnitude, and sending their noses as flat as peacocks' tails in the rain. But they are almost the only people whose noses are elastic, and able to spring back again to the original arch after flattening by rivals. And with them a new piece, with only a fine dress or a striking attitude in it, will put everything straight again, like one of those india-rubber faces when you take away your thumbs, and let the face go back to its original condition.

But perhaps the place where noses get the hardest of these thumps and bumps, is in the country, where there is a local tendency to hero-worship, and the cordial recognition of home-made gods, if not the preference. There are always certain Aristoi in a country place—the Best of their kind and class—Brahmins of beauty or talent or grace or wealth, which society there accepts as its culminating point—ideals from which, according to some of the simpler sort, there is no beyond. For instance, there is Miss Lucy, the declared beauty of Littletown, the finest and handsomest and dearest and gracefulest young lady as ever was or ever could be. It would be little less than high treason to hint at any flaw in Miss Lucy's perfections. Her dress is a model of taste and elegance, combined with practicability and economy: does she not go twice a year to her cousins at Canonbury, in London, bringing home the fashions, which all the milliners and shopkeepers' wives of Littletown incontinently copy, and never by any chance make to come right or like the original? And has she not the thickest and longest and loveliest golden hair in the world? It is a tradition down there that Truefitt once offered her five pounds if she would only let him cut off enough to make a coronet for a duchess who had commissioned him for a tail of that exact shade, no matter what the cost. And has she not the clearest and deepest blue eyes, just the colour of very good sapphires? and the trimmest waist, and the smallest feet for miles round? Old Last, the head shoemaker of Littletown, always exhibits Miss Lucy's shoes and boots as models of what shoes and boots should be, and as he could make them too, if all feet were what they ought to be. And so Miss Lucy's reign has been undisturbed for this last six or seven years (for beauties reign long in the country), and would have remained undisturbed to the end of her generation, if Miss Bella Belinda had not come whisking down one day on a visit to the vicar, and shown the poor benighted natives what

taste and beauty and fashion really were. Miss Bella Belinda had lived in Paris; she had seen Rome and Florence, and Naples and Geneva; it was her boast that not an article of her attire was English, and that she was foreign all over, from her hat to her boots—which were smaller than Miss Lucy's, of daintier material and of neater make.

Imagine the state of poor Miss Lucy's nose after the arrival of Miss Bella Belinda! Her golden curls went down in the Littletown market to the price of tow; her eyes were only porcelain beads imitative of turquoise, and no longer precious stones of the value of lapis lazuli or sapphires; she was all very well, you know, but nothing so very particular after all; and then she had decidedly gone off these last few years. Miss Lucy was, let me see—yes! Miss Lucy was certainly eight-and-twenty if she was a day, and young ladies at eight-and-twenty have turned the corner, and are travelling down hill a little. Now Miss Bella Belinda was very different. There was a young lady worth looking at if you like! Look at her hair and her eyes and her hands and her skin, and, in short, look at all that was hers, and then uphold Miss Lucy as *prima donna* if you liked! Poor Miss Lucy!—Lucy Poocey as her friends used to call her—she learnt the fickleness of popular favour and the theory of noses out of joint as well as the most notorious hero with a smashed pedestal, lying prostrate on the ground with his nose in the mud, instead of turned proudly up to heaven, sniffing the sweet odours of gum-benjamin burning in the censers swinging beneath. But she was good-natured, partly because she was indifferent and lazy; so she took suit and service in Miss Bella Belinda's court.

The young men in the country go through the same kind of thing. Young Thomson, and Johnson, and Smithson, are all very well—oh! very well indeed! while there are no fresh importations, and they stand undisturbed in their quality as native beaux; but let an irruption come—let the neighbouring town receive a garrison—let a party of Cantabs come down to read during the Long—let young Sir Fred Norman take Tumbledown Hall and convert it into a shooting-box for the season, with plenty of pleasant fellows and jolly parties to help the dulness of Littletown—and then look at our young natives' noses, and see to their condition of flatness!

It is the same thing with the reigning belle of the county balls, when another belle flashes into her sphere; the same when little sissy comes, and poor little brother's nose is put out in the nursery where it has ruled the whole house with its tiny knob for nearly two years now; the same when Miss Petlove changes her doctor or her minister, and when Mr. Loveall changes his ideal; the same when the long "affair" of many years—that enduring flirtation of half a lifetime—suddenly breaks off, not in the pleasant consummation of matrimony, but into the divergence of a new thread

lately introduced into the skein ; the same when any favourite whatever has to undergo snubbing by a rival, and a smashed nose in consequence.

A TARTAR MOSQUE.

EVERY week of my stay at Moscow I had been resolving to go to the Friday morning service at the Tartar mosque. At last I one day determined to increase no longer the pavement of a place below me by any further fruitless good resolutions, so summoned my irritable, idle, and grumbling valet de place to my heel—much as an angry man does his runagate pointer on a September morning, when the bright keen air is all alive with partridges—and sallied off, across the stone bridge below the Kremlin, to that quiet suburb of the Holy City, wherein, I had been informed, stood a small Tartar mosque, where a small migratory congregation of Moslems worshipped every Friday.

Herr Schlafrig, my German valet de place aforesaid, who was vexed at my sudden promptitude, and at the prospect of a long and dusty walk, sulkily informed me, with the torpid dulness of a much-bored man, that there were about a hundred and thirty Tartars living in Moscow, and some forty Persians. The former were all true believers of the Koran and the Mahomedan traditions, the rest Shiites or heretical followers of Ali. The mosque belonged to the orthodox men ; as for the heretics, they performed their devotions privately in the house of a merchant of their own sect. All these Tartars and Persian exiles were either coachmen, or sellers in the bazaars of dressing-gowns of Bokharian silk. In St. Petersburg, where Tartars were less numerous, the true believers met for weekly prayer in the house of an orthodox merchant. The great mosques were, however, in the Crimea and at Kasam.

Moscow, the city of churches, never seemed to me so beautiful and so picturesque as it did that fine September morning. We had passed down the street of the Smith's Bridge—the Regent-street of Moscow—famous for its jewellers' shops, confectioners, and music-sellers ; and, passing through an embattled gate that pierced a long line of white rampart, had reached the great dusty square that girdles round the strange towers and Chinese-looking battlements of the Kremlin enclosure. Before us was that pagoda-like pile of striped and coloured spires and domes, reared by Ivan the Terrible to show the fantastic prodigality of his architectural imagination, and of which that crowned brute is said to have been so proud that he put out the eyes of the Italian who built it, lest he should erect any rival temple that might surpass it. There it was, with its green and golden turbans of cupolas, and its bulbous spires, crowned with rough blossoms of iron thistles, that shone in the royal sunshine. On one side of us was the Holy

Gate of the Kremlin, through which even the emperor may not pass without doffed hat. The dusky sacred picture and the eternal lamp above the portal, that even the flames which drove Napoleon from his prey, could not deface. Now, we are lower down, and on the bridge. Below us rippled the shallow fretting stream. Those great hampers in the water were fish preserves. Above us, on the opposite bank, rose the Kremlin towers—half Indian, half Chinese in character—unaltered since the clouds of Tartars howled at the sight of them. That great gilt roofed tower was the Tower of Ivan Veleki. Those gilded domes, clustering together, were the roofs of the sacred churches—St. Michael the Archangel, the Uspenski-Sabor, and their companions. Great clouds of dust rose as there came racing over the bridge, flocks of telegas and country carts, mere long narrow cradles, mounted on rude wheels ; in those cradles, lined with hay, sat country women in sheepskin coats, and with coloured handkerchiefs bound round their heads, good-natured stupid-looking creatures, bound to Moscow to sell birch-wood, or to do shopping on the humblest scale. After them trotted by, a lancer with a red and yellow pennon fluttering from the lance at his elbow, an open carriage full of German tourists, or a crowd of shock-headed burly peasants, already half drunk, clumsy and noisy, but still abject and civil, to all they met. Now, the bridge left behind us, and the Kremlin hidden by houses, we plunged into the suburbs. No dreary stucco palaces now, no gymnasium, no academy for cadets, no barrack : only quiet soft unpaved roads, bordered by small houses and gardens, the walls generally of plank, not always painted. One of the longest and prettiest of all the streets was Tartar-street. But it revealed so little sign of a mosque, that Schlafrig had to inquire (with a contemptuous look at me for proposing such an expedition) of a soldier, where it was. All at once we came to a green garden door, which Schlafrig pushed open contemptuously, and we found ourselves in a grassy court-yard, at one end of which stood a single-storyed house, with a cumbrous ladder resting against the front wall, and steps leading to a side entrance. The roof of the building was formed, like other Russian roofs, of large plates of iron painted a dark chocolate red. It wanted by my watch five minutes to twelve. Now, I was sorry we were so late, because I knew that at half-past eleven on Fridays—the day on which the Moslems hold that Adam was created and died, and the day on which the general resurrection is to take place—the blind muedin, or caller to prayer, would have ascended by that big ladder to that red roof, and have chanted the following supplication to the prophet :

"Blessing and peace be on thee, O thou of great dignity ! O, apostle of God ! Blessing and peace be on thee; to whom the Truth said, I am God ; blessing and peace be on thee, thou first of the creatures of God, and seal of the apostles of God ! From me be peace on

thee, on thee and on thy family, and on all thy companions."

And all this in a long-drawn, nasal chant, sonorous and far-reaching, which must have penetrated into every back room, and alcove and garden of every shawl-seller in that tranquil street. This chant would have taken the place of the daybreak or midnight call to prayer, so, persistent, so Oriental, so wild, and so protracted. The "Come to prayer, come to prayer. Come to security. God is great, God is great. There is no deity but God. Prayer is better than sleep, prayer is better than sleep." All this I had missed; nor could I indeed see any congregation.

I looked in. Schlafrig, evidently afraid of the Tartars, pulled me by the arm, and entreated me not to go a step nearer. In the porch were three pairs of slippers. Inside, in a large square perfectly plain room, lighted by three large square windows, and carpeted with Persian carpet, knelt the three turbanned owners of those three pairs of slippers, looking towards the niche that directed them to Mecca. They were as still as images, except every now and then, when a grave pale face turned towards the doorway, or when one of them suddenly bent forward and touched the carpet with his forehead. A dusty ill-cut glass chandelier hung from the roof, and a clumsy dark wooden chair, which served as a pulpit and a seat for the reader of the Koran, constituted all the furniture. The carpet was an old Persian carpet, still soft and rich, though its deep reds and blues had long since faded to a brownish white. The mosque had once boasted a carpet of enormous value, the glory of the looms of Isphahan, but some Muscovite dog had stolen it. May his grave be defiled, and the examining angels, Mumkar and Nekeer, when they come to question him in his grave, pummel him well with their maces of red-hot iron for robbing the poor church of the humble exiles!

All at once one of the three worshippers, who turned out to be the muedin, or caller to prayer, rose from his knees, tucked his black beaded rosary in a fold of his great white turban, and gravely turning with an air of the profoundest and humblest piety, came to the door, shuffled his slippers on, and, coming out into the open air, turned his face towards Mecca, and then raising his open hands, palms outwards, to each side of his old face, and carefully touching the lobe of each ear with the thumb of each hand, began to screech the call to prayer which I have already given, with the most agonising and piercing acuteness that can be imagined. Without any apparent tendency to apoplexy, or even of blood to the head, without turning damson colour or getting red about the whites of his eyes, this detestable old man of the sea, intensely grave under the responsibility of being a whole peal of bells, a gong, and a brazen-lunged herald all in one, emitted his excruciating nasal gush of Arabic, guttural and metallic by turns, hideous to the ears as ten cats fighting, irritating as the

screeching hiss of a knife-grinder's stone, and detectable as the noise of sharpening saws.

At first I felt a certain sudden heat rise in my blood tempting me at all hazards to rush at the gullet of the old man of the sea and choke him into silence. The next moment a tickling effervescence about the diaphragm compelled me to step round the angle of the mosque and cram my handkerchief into my mouth, so unexpected was the old man's appearance, and so outrageously discordant his performance.

At the same time a sub-current of graver thoughts passed through my mind. I felt a pity for these humble Publicans, who, far from the Greek Pharisees, with their jewelled pictures, gilt shrines, and countless tapers, came to this quiet retreat to turn their faces and their hearts to Mecca, and worship the God of their fathers in the old simple way first taught in the Arabian desert. Far otherwise had I seen the turbaned Moslem in the Lebanon, at Cairo, at Stamboul, and at Jerusalem, too ready in all those places to lay hand on his sabre, and, when he dared, to spurn the Christian under foot.

No huge-domed temple here, supported by pillars wrench'd from Ephesian shrines, no great marble courts with fountains all in a grey flutter with favoured doves, no long pendent strings of silk tassels and ostrich eggs, no great scaffold network of lamps; no, here only the sober penury of the early Christians, and a worship unseen and unheeded of men. No galleried minarets here rose like Tamerlane's lances into the clear sky, no dervishes raved out prophecies against the giaour, no sultans' tombs were here, covered with Indian shawls and crowned with diamond-crested turbans. No crowd of bare-armed servants hurried to lay the prayer carpets, to light the lamps, to fill the vessels for ablution, or to mount the minaret. There were no students here, reading the Koran; no groups of idlers sleeping, spinning, eating, as in the Egyptian mosques of an afternoon; these poor Tartars were in a hidden corner of the city of the most deadly of their enemies.

But now the worshippers began one by one to drop in, and I had no more time for comparisons. Every moment the green garden door creaked open, and some man or lad entered, shuffled off his slippers, placed them in the doorway, and then, passing in, knelt in prayer; now it was an old shabby man, with the bent look of a mechanic; now a smart bright-eyed stripling, who entered with a jaunty and rather pert trip, thinking, I fear, more of his snow-white turban and the rosary that looped round his wrist, than of the prophet or the wiles of Eblis. Presently a mere ceremonialist slid in, his mind still preoccupied with the price of rose-attar, and his eyes wandering round on the strangers, or oftener on a poor pariah, who, less virtuous than Lazarus, and almost more degraded, knelt apart, far behind the rest, in the light of the window furthest from the niche which showed the direction of Mecca.

This pariah was a tall lean man, with a pale skull-like face, bare shaven head, and poverty-stricken dress, of which the oddest feature was a white shirt, worn over ragged European trousers. He knelt with downcast head and clenched hands, hardly daring to look round him. He was a Tartar sent from the great prison at Moscow, under guard of a soldier, to attend his devotions at the mosque of his nation. There was the grim stupidly-contemptuous soldier in his brown-grey great-coat and yellow facings, watching him luridly from the doorway, a straw between his great horse teeth, and a spiked helmet on his ugly bullet of a half-reclaimed Tartar head. Eventually this warrior lay down in the sun, tried to look watchful and intelligent, and, exhausted by that intense mental effort, fell fast asleep, and snored like an afreet or a ghoul after a heavy churchyard meal.

By this time some thirty Tartars had assembled, and were kneeling in a row before the niche, which, in the mosques of these image-worshippers, is always perfectly bare and unadorned, being merely intended to serve as a compass to mark the direction to Mecca. Most of the men were kneeling back and resting their hands upon their knees in the prescribed way. Others occasionally bent gravely forward till their foreheads touched the ground, and then arose equally gravely and slowly. All this is part of a religious drill, in which every movement of the foot, hand, or head, is studied and prescribed? Had I not known the Moslem ritual, I should have thought the movements unmeaning; but I knew the silent prayer with which it was accompanied, and will describe it.

Let me take as my instance that fat full-fleshed evidently rich merchant who has just slipped off his shining patent leather overalls, and now waddles forward to the place where he means to kneel. He leaves an oppressive odour of musk as he moves along, showing that he has just emerged from the bath. His pelisse is of rich walnut-coloured silk, his turban of the finest cambric muslin, opaque only from the thickness of its folds. How soft and plump and white his hands are, how sharp and sleepy by turns are his little black eyes, how full of importance he is; he surely must be the great Pan Nam Jam himself, with the little round button on the top of his head, who ate apple-pie till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of his boots—that great potentate immortalised by Foote. How he spurns with his eye the poor cringing prisoner, how he ruffles along, as if every other Moslem owed him piles of sequins and handfuls of piastres.

See now! He stands erect facing the niche, and raising his open hands to the lobes of his ears, says to himself, "God is great—Allahoo Akbar!" Now, placing his hands together, like a soldier standing at ease, with bended head, he repeats, silently, the Fathah, or opening chapter of the Koran, or the short one hundred and twelfth chapter. He then again says, "God is great!" and as he says it, he places his hands with his

fingers spread upon his knees, and bends down till his head is level with his waist; and as he remains thus, he says three times, still to himself, "I extol the perfection of my Lord the great. May God hear him who praiseth Him; our Lord, praise be unto thee!" Then, raising his head, he exclaims, "God is great!" and drops softly on his knees, and, repeating the exclamation of praise, places his hands on the ground a little before his knees, and touches the ground with his forehead, between his two hands. While he performs this prostration, he repeats the "Allah Akbar" three times. He then raises his head and rests on his knees before he repeats the prostrations and the exclamations of praise. He then rises and repeats the whole ceremony, or Rekah, as it is called. After the second rekah, he rests on his knees, bending his left foot under him, and placing his hands upon his thighs, says to himself: "Praises are to God, and prayers, and good works. Peace be on thee, O prophet, and the mercy of God and his blessings. Peace be on us, and on all the righteous worshippers of God." Then raising the first finger of the right hand, he says: "I testify that there is no deity but God, and I testify that Mahomed is his servant and his apostle."

After this, which is the work of only two or three minutes, the Tartar merchant, looking first on his right shoulder and then on his left, repeats the words, "Peace be on you and the mercy of God." The benediction is addressed to the one hundred and sixty guardian angels, who, some say, attend and guard every true believer, and to all good Moslems present. This finished, the merchant repeats some petition of the Koran, holding his two hands before his face as if they formed a book, and then drawing them over his face, from the forehead downwards. Then he remains sitting, and as his big lips keep moving I know that the fat Pharisee is repeating verses of supererogation—the *Throne verse*, or the two hundred and fifty-sixth verse of the second chapter of the Koran—or repeating "God is most great" thirty-three times running; every time he says it a bead of his aloes-wood rosary slipping between his plump white fingers.

And now a strange dream comes into my head, and that is, that every one of those two rows of Moslems is one of the characters of the Arabian Nights. That fat merchant was the insolent oppressor of Sinbad; those three men next him are clearly the three Calenders; that boy is Aladdin, the smart and mischievous; before him stands the merchant who killed the Afrit's son with the date-stone. And the poor down-trodden prisoner is, I am sure, the unlucky confectioner who was condemned to death for that matter of the pepper in the cream tarts of the princess.

The constitution of the Mahomedan Church is very simple. In Constantinople, there is a Sheikh el Islam, a sort of national archbishop, who has great power, or rather used to have, and, in past times, helped to remove many a

sultan by steel or bowstring. In the Egyptian mosques there is always a nazir or warden, who is the trustee and manager of the houses, lands, and money, left to the mosque; and it is he who appoints and dismisses the doorkeepers, water-bearers, sweepers, and lamplighters. There are generally to the larger mosques two Imams or lay-readers of the Koran; one of whom delivers the short sermon every Friday; but, in small mosques, like those at Moscow, the preacher and reader are one and the same person. These men can follow any trade, and are paid by the funds of the mosque, not by voluntary or involuntary subscriptions. They do not depend on the caprice of their congregation. They are ordinary tradesmen who, for a piastre or halfpenny, or, at the most, five piastres a month, recite five prayers a day, and preach the weekly homily. They are often, however, schoolmasters, professional readers of the Koran, or poor students. They have no authority over any one. They do not visit, or exhort, or perform any rites. They do not live apart or remain unmarried in order to devote their whole time to the objects of professional ambition, nor are they in any way tied indissolubly to their religious profession, nor do they arrogate to themselves any special infallibility of interpreting the Koran, or regulating other men's lives. The Mahomedan, in fact, is his own priest, and pays nothing to any religious teacher, trusting to the infallible Koran to guide him, and giving his alms and performing his pilgrimage unaided. The Imam out of the mosque wears no special dress, and is no one. The people do not run to kiss his hand or his robe, as the Russian peasants do to their own brutally ignorant peasant priests. The mosques are open from daybreak till after sunset. Sometimes they are shut between the hours of prayer, especially in dirty weather, when the building might otherwise be polluted. Sometimes a mosque is left open all night, except the maksoorah or chancel, which is partitioned off. The Mahomedan performs his ceremonies with just as much unction in his own house as in the mosque. The mosque is a place where the attendants work, eat, sleep, and even live; and yet they venerate the place of prayer in spite of what we should consider an habitual desecration.

But to return to the service. The Tartars, kneeling two deep, had now completed their private prayers, and the old reader seated himself in the old arm-chair, and began reciting from memory, in Arabic, and with an abstracted air and a low guttural voice, the Soorak-el-Kahf, or eighteenth chapter of the Koran. Although Arabic is a majestic language, every word seemed to begin with a guttural in this chapter.

All at once he rose, and all the congregation rose and began more rekahs. Down went all the turbaned heads together, down at the same moment in perfect unison; tap, tap, tap, went all the

foreheads. Then came the sermon. In Cairo, or any city wrench'd from the infidel, it is usual for the preacher to hold a wooden sword, point downward, in his hand, but in Moscow this ceremony was omitted. The sermon I understood too little Arabic to clearly follow. I gathered, however, that it was a general exhortation to a better life, garnished with Koran texts, abounding in Oriental repetition, and not devoid of the exuberant imagery of the East.

The concluding khutbeh, or bidding prayer, is, however, always the same, and ends thus, as I know from several Oriental travellers:

"O Lord, we have acted unjustly towards our own souls, and if thou do not forgive us and be merciful unto us, we shall surely be of those who perish. I beg of God the Great that he may forgive me, and you, and all the people of Mahomed, the servants of God. Verily God commandeth justice and the doing of good, and giveth what is due, and forbiddeth wickedness, and iniquity, and oppression. He admonisheth you that ye may reflect. Remember God—he will remember you—and thank him—He will increase your blessings. Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures!"

This having been said, all rose and bowed their turbaned heads, held their open hands before their eyes, drew them down their faces, and slowly dispersed. The three Calenders gathered up their rosaries from beside them; Aladdin's eyes sparkled as he sprang gleefully to his feet; Sinbad's persecutor shook his scented robes and put on his shining papooshes; the poor prisoner shrugged, writhed, and hung his head; and the Moslem congregation dispersed.

It seemed so bright and golden coming out of the porch into the glad sunshine, and the little grass-flowers in the court-yard were vibrating in the breeze with gratitude to God, and love to their fellow-creature, man. One by one the turbaned men in the striped silk caftans put on their robes and slippers and passed through the green door. And I could see here and there at the villa windows, little shaven heads dancing about with joy at the return of Father Abdallah or Father Alee. And by the time when I, Herr Schlafrig, the soldier, and our disreputable mauvais sujet, name unknown, had reached the bottom of the street, there was not a Tartar to be seen.

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